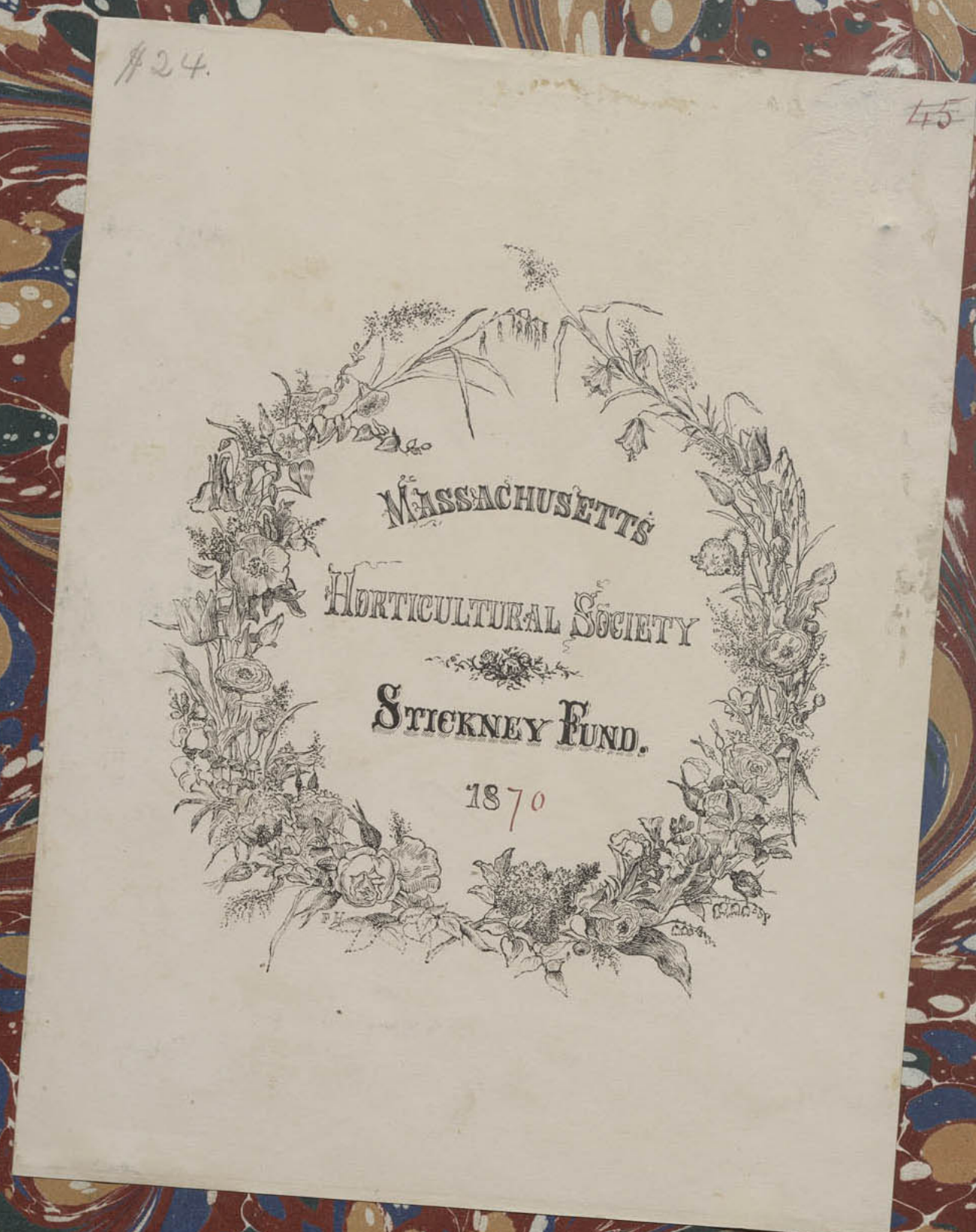
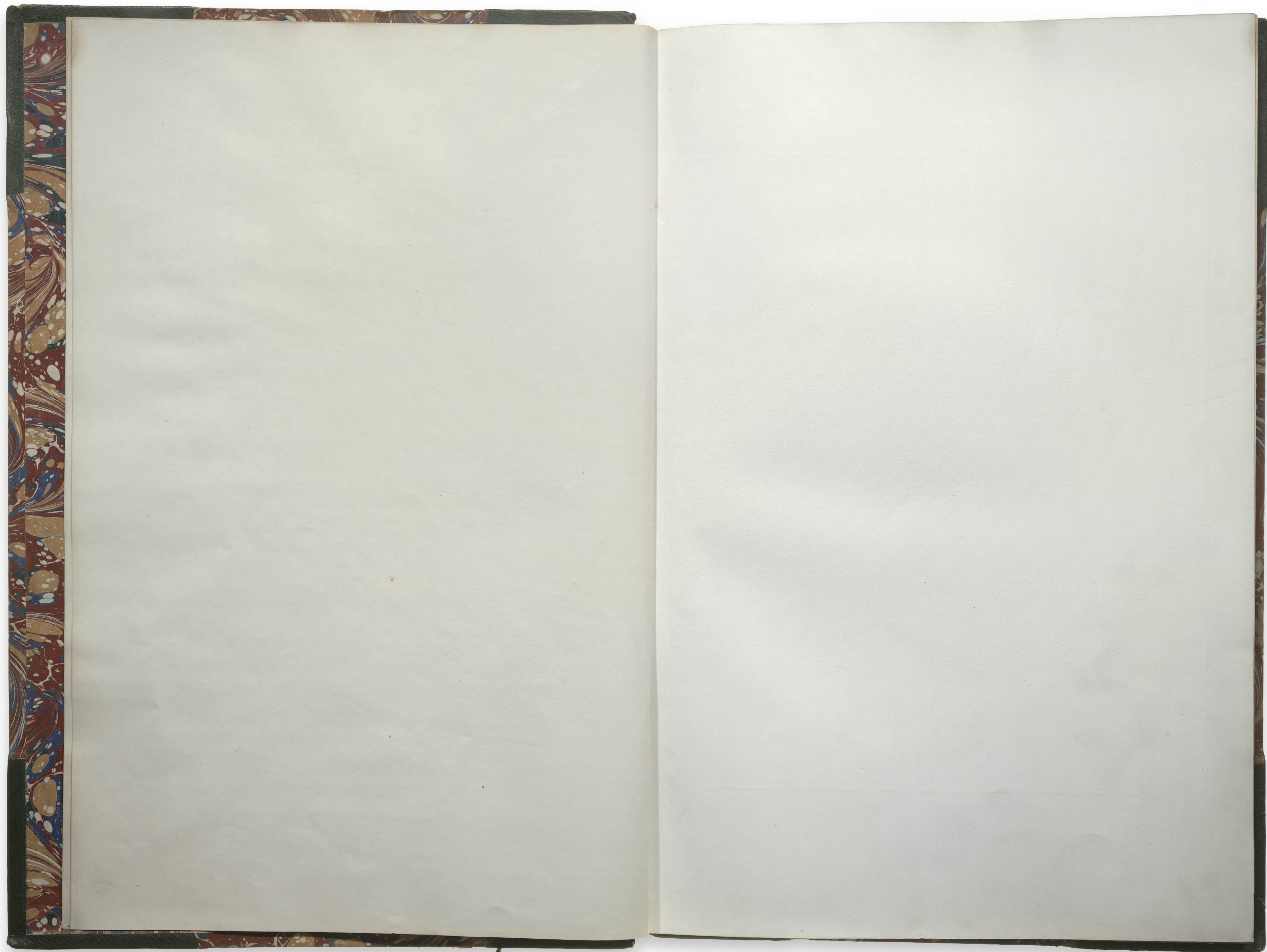


STRUTT'S
SYLVÆ
BRITANNICA



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SYLVA
BRITANNICA
OR PORTRAITS OF
FOREST TREES
TO
JOHN, DUKE OF BEDFORD
BY
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
HIS GRACE'S OBTAINING SENT
J. G. Jones 1826

J. G. Jones fecit et exculit 34, Percy Street Bedford Square London. 1826

1826

Sylva Britannica;

OR,

PORTRAITS OF FOREST TREES,

DISTINGUISHED FOR THEIR

ANTIQUITY, MAGNITUDE, OR BEAUTY.

DRAWN FROM NATURE, AND ETCHED

BY

JACOB GEORGE STRUTT.

Hail, old Patrician trees! COWLEY.
—arched walks of twilight groves
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak. MILTON.

LONDON:

HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1826.

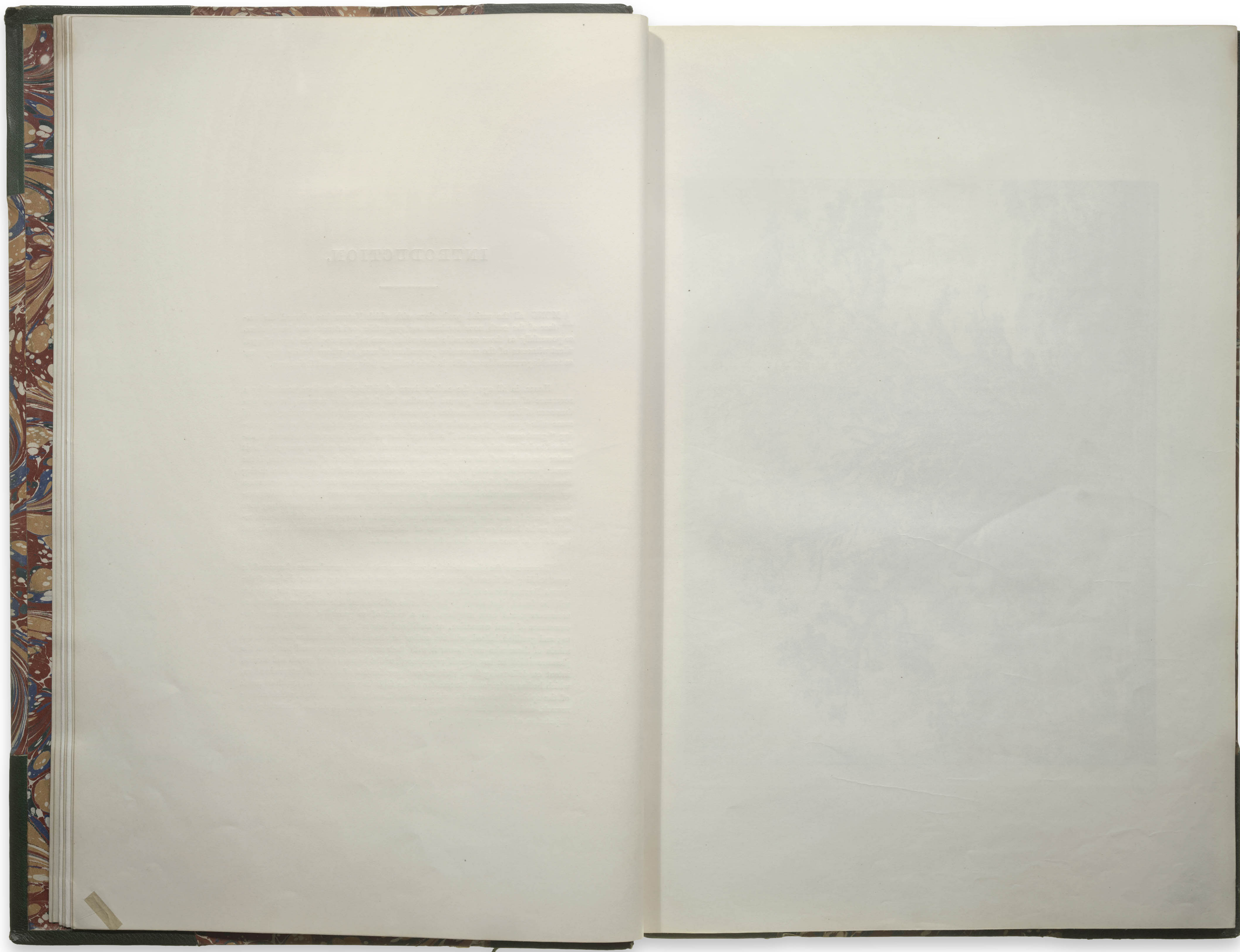
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INTRODUCTION.

AMONG all the varied productions with which Nature has adorned the surface of the earth, none awakens our sympathies, or interests our imagination, so powerfully as those venerable trees which seem to have stood the lapse of ages, silent witnesses of the successive generations of man, to whose destiny they bear so touching a resemblance, alike in their budding, their prime, and their decay.

Hence, in all ages, the earliest dawn of civilization has been marked by a reverence of woods and groves: devotion has fled to their recesses, for the performance of her most solemn rites; princes have chosen the embowering shade of some wide-spreading tree, under which to receive the deputations of the neighbouring "great ones of the earth;" and angels themselves, it is recorded, have not disdained to deliver their celestial messages beneath the same verdant canopy. To sit under the shadow of his own fig-tree, and drink of the fruit of his own vine, is the reward promised, in Holy Writ, to the righteous man; and the gratification arising from the sight of a favourite and long-remembered tree, is one enjoyed in common by the nobleman, who is reminded, as its branches wave over his head, whilst wandering in his hereditary domains, of the illustrious ancestors by whom it may have been planted; and the peasant, who, passing it in his way to his daily labours, recalls, as he looks on it, the sports of his infancy round its venerable trunk, and regards it at once as his chronicler and land-mark.

To preserve the characteristics, and perpetuate the remembrance of some of the most striking of these objects, in themselves so interesting, is the design of the *SYLVA BRITANNICA*: in the descriptions, therefore, which accompany the plates, it will be found, that although the minutiae of botanical definitions are omitted, as unnecessary, and even misplaced, in a work of so general a nature, every circumstance of local connexion, or traditional interest, has been carefully attended to; and gratified, indeed, will the author be, should his performance inspire in the minds of those who may favour it with their attention, even a small portion of the pleasure which he has himself experienced, whilst haunting the woods and forests, intent on delineating those varieties and peculiarities of their noblest productions, which he has endeavoured to transfer to the following representations, with as much of the spirit of Nature as he could command, and with all the truth, which minute remark, and faithful imitation may, he hopes, lay claim to, without hazarding the imputation of undue presumption.





The Ancient Linn Oak

PL 5

SYLVA BRITANNICA.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES.

PLATE I.—THE SWILCAR-LAWN OAK.

THE OAK, admirable alike for its beauty and utility, has ever been distinguished as the glory of the forest; over all the trees of which it may be considered to reign with undisputed sway, both in importance and longevity.

The Oak was held sacred by the Greeks, the Romans, the Gauls, and the Britons. Among the Romans, it was dedicated to Jupiter; among the ancient Britons, its consecrated shade was devoted to the most solemn ceremonies of the Druids; and scarcely is it held in less veneration by their descendants, who find all the interest of which it may be despoiled by the passing away of the superstitions connected with it in former ages, revived in those present to them, by the ideas of British power, and British independence, inseparably associated with the image of the British Oak, in the minds of Englishmen; who see in every acorn that drops from its branching arms,

Those sapling oaks which at Britannia's call
May leave their trunks mature into the main,
And float the bulwarks of her liberty.—MASON.

In proportion as the Oak is valued above all other trees, so is the English Oak esteemed above that of any other country, for its particular characteristics of hardness and toughness; qualities, which so peculiarly fit it for ship-building, and which are thus admirably expressed in two epithets by that great poet, to whom the book of Nature, and of the human heart, seemed alike laid open.

Thou rather with thy sharp and sulph'rous bolt,
Split'st the *unwedgeable and guarded* Oak,
Than the soft myrtle.—SHAKESPEARE.

The Oak is to be found in all soils; its growth, however, greatly depends on the nature of that wherein it may be planted; for though the hardness of its infancy is such as to render choice or care apparently unnecessary, yet as it advances towards maturity, the depth and extent to which it strikes its roots, make much of both its magnitude and vigor depend on the congenial and uninterrupted field it may find for its powers.

Under favorable circumstances, the Oak attains an age far beyond that which has been assigned to it by popular belief, viz. an hundred years for its growth, an hundred for its maturity, and an hundred for its decline. The Swilcar Oak, represented in the accompanying engraving, is known, by historical documents, to be, at this time, six hundred years old; and it is still far from being in the last stage of decay.

This venerable tree stands in Needwood Forest, in Staffordshire. Its girth, at the height of six feet from the ground, is twenty-one feet four inches and a half. Fifty-four years ago it was girthed in the same place, by a laboring man still living, and measured at that time nineteen feet. It has been celebrated in poetic strains by several modern bards; among whom may be particularized Mr. Mundy, whose mention of it, in his poem of "Needwood Forest," drew forth so elegant a compliment to himself, and so animated an apostrophe to the venerable subject of his verse, from the pen of Doctor Darwin, that it is hoped but little apology will be deemed necessary for introducing the lines containing them, as the most appropriate conclusion that can be given to this article.

"Gigantic Oak! whose wrinkled form hath stood,
Age after age, the patriarch of the wood!—
Thou, who hast seen a thousand springs unfold
Their ravel'd buds, and dip their flowers in gold;
Ten thousand times you moon re-light her horn,
And that bright star of evening gild the morn!—

"Ere, when the Druid-bards with silver hair
Pour'd round thy trunk the melody of prayer;
When chiefs and heroes join'd the kneeling throng,
And choral virgins trill'd the adorning song;
While harp responsive rung amid the glade,
And holy echoes thrill'd thy vaulted shade;
Say, did such dulcet notes arrest thy gales,
As Mundy pours along the list'ning vales?

"Gigantic Oak! thy hoary head sublime,
Erewhile must perish in the wrecks of time:
Should round thy brow innocuous lightnings shoot,
And no fierce whirlwinds shake the stedfast root;
Yet shalt Thou fall!—thy leafy tresses fade,
And those bare shatter'd antlers strew the glade;
Arm after arm shall leave the mouldering bust,
And thy firm fibres crumble into dust!—

"But Mundy's verse shall consecrate thy name,
And rising forests envy SWILCAR's fame,
Green shall thy germs expand, thy branches play,
And bloom for ever in th' immortal lay."

PLATE II.—THE BEGGAR'S OAK.

THE BEGGAR'S OAK stands in Bagot's Park, about four miles from Blithfield, the seat of the Right Honorable Lord Bagot, near Litchfield. The scenery which surrounds it, is singularly interesting and appropriate—the stillness of antique trees and forest glades is relieved by animated groups of deer, whose characteristics peculiarly suit the features of the scene; and by a still more striking race of wild goats, originally presented, by Richard the Second, to one of Lord Bagot's ancestors.

The Beggar's Oak is supposed to have received its name from the accommodation it is so well calculated to afford in its ample canopy, "star-proof," and its moss-grown roots, to the weary mendicants who may in former times have been tempted to seek the shade of its branches, for repose or shelter. Its girth at five feet from the ground is twenty feet; the circumference of the roots which project above the surface of the ground is sixty-eight feet; and the branches extend about sixteen yards from the trunk in every direction. It contains by admeasurement eight hundred and seventy-seven cubic feet of timber, which, including the bark, would have produced, at a price offered for it in 1812, the sum of £202 14s. 9d. But this noble tree, as well as many other of the "giants of the forests," with which Bagot's Park abounds, are secure from the axe, under the protection of their present munificent proprietor; who best shows his sense of the value of the woody domains, received from his ancestors, by endeavouring to secure the same gratification to his posterity; annually planting a large portion of his estates, with a taste and zeal which well deserves to be imitated, by all such landed proprietors as may be actuated by a laudable ambition to make their private possessions a source of public ornament and of national wealth.

PLATE III.—THE GREAT OAK AT FREDVILLE.

This remarkable tree, which, from its size and grandeur, has received the appropriate name of *Majesty*, stands nearly in front of the family mansion of John Plumtre, Esquire, in his park at Fredville, in the parish of Nonnington, Kent. At eight feet from the ground, its circumference exceeds twenty-eight feet, and it contains above fourteen hundred feet of timber.

Two other oaks in the immediate vicinity of the above, present a graceful contrast in character; as may be imagined from the epithets of *Stately* and *Beauty*, by which they are distinguished. The former is of singularly noble aspect, the stem going up straight and clean to the height of about seventy feet; the girth, at four feet from the ground, is eighteen feet, and it contains above five hundred feet of timber. The circumference of the latter at an equal height is about sixteen feet, and its solid contents are nearly the same. Altogether these three Graces of the forest form, immediately within sight of the house, a group, which, for magnificence and beauty, is not perhaps exceeded by any other of the same nature; awakening in the mind of the spectator, the most agreeable associations of the freedom and grandeur of woodland scenery, with the security and refinements of cultivated life.

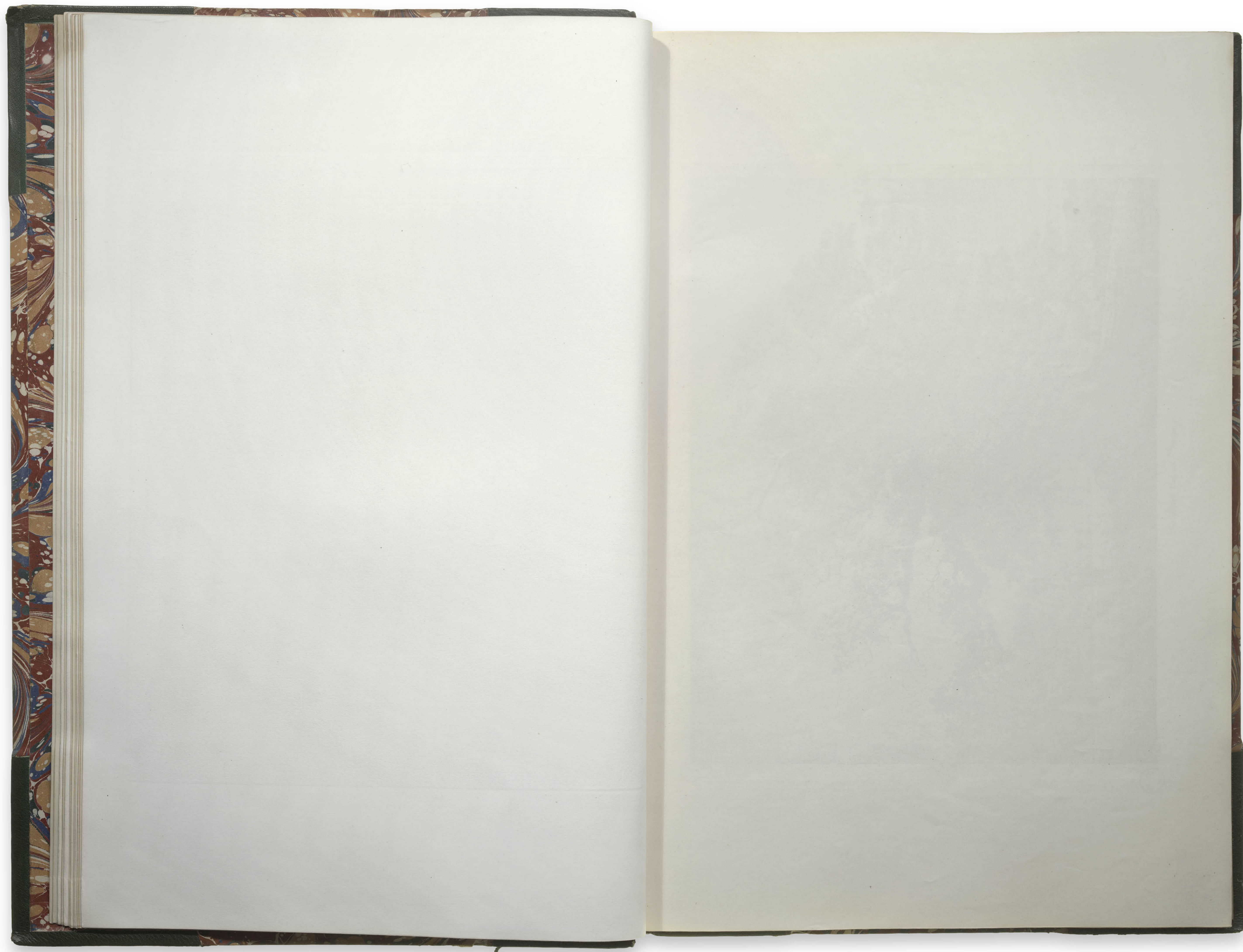
PLATE IV.—THE PANSHANGER OAK.

This elegant tree, according to tradition, was known as "the great Oak of Panshanger," more than a century ago; it appears, however, even now, to have scarcely reached its prime; the waving lightness of its feathered branches, dipping down, towards its stem, to the very ground, the straightness of its trunk, and the redundancy of its foliage, all give it a character opposite to that of antiquity; and fit it for the cultivated and sequestered pleasure grounds belonging to the mansion of Earl Cowper, at Panshanger, in Hertfordshire; where it stands surrounded with evergreens and lighter shrubs, of which it seems at once the guardian and the pride. It contains one thousand feet of timber, and is nineteen feet in circumference, at three feet from the ground.



The Beggars' Oak.

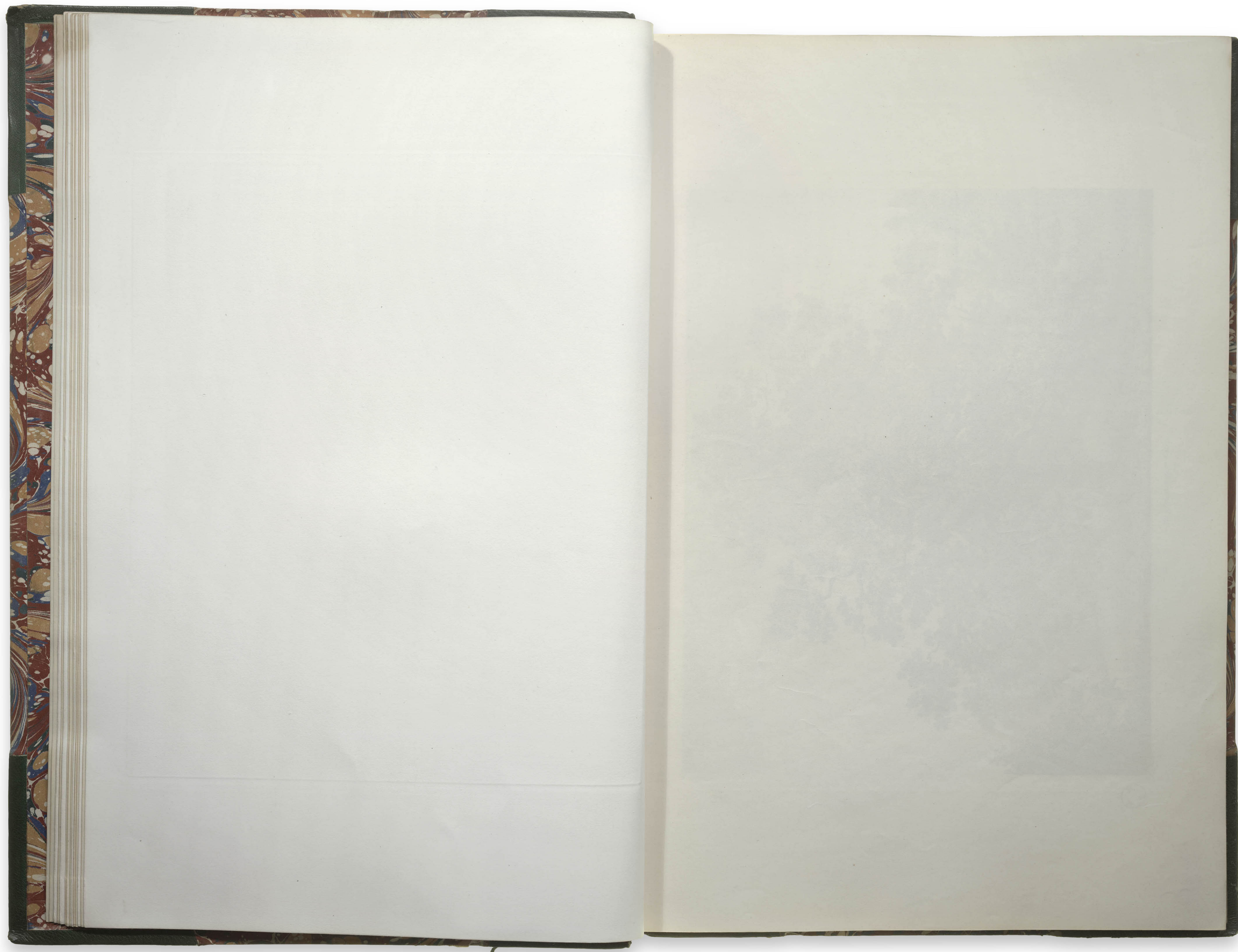
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The Great Oak at Fitchville.

57





The Sandhanger Oak

1845





The Chipstead Elm

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8





The Judas Tree

H. 2

PLATE V.—THE CHIPSTEAD ELM.

IN the scale of precedence among Forest trees, the Elm, which is indigenous to England, has a right, both with respect to beauty and utility, to claim a place next to the Oak in dignity and rank. One very important property, as regards the usefulness of its timber, is that of being able to bear the alternations of dryness and moisture, without rotting; which renders it more especially fit for all purposes connected with water, or exposure to the atmosphere. The hardness of its grain is another quality that adds to its value; nor ought its foliage to be forgotten; forming, as it may do, a substitute for hay and fodder, in times of scarcity: the Roman husbandman, indeed, frequently fed his cattle on the leaves of the Elm; hence Virgil reckons the redundancy of them among its excellencies:

"Fecundæ frondibus Ulmi."

No tree bears transplanting better than the Elm. It will suffer removal even at twenty years of age; which renders it very desirable for those who may wish to impart to new-built mansions the respectability which leafy shades, of apparently long standing, always confer on a habitation. The Elm, is indeed, peculiarly fitted for "the length of colonnade," with which our forefathers loved to make graceful and gradual entry to their hospitable halls. Loving society, yet averse from a crowd, delighting in fresh air, and in room to expand its roots, and affording its aid to all the weaker plants in its vicinity that may seek its support, it presents a pleasing emblem of the class of country gentlemen, whose abodes it is oftenest found to adorn and protect.

The Chipstead Elm stands on a rising ground, in a retired part of the pleasure-garden of George Polhill, Esq., of Chipstead Place, in Kent. It is sixty feet high; twenty feet in circumference at the base; and fifteen feet eight inches, at three feet and a half from the ground. It contains two hundred and sixty-eight feet of timber; but this bulk is comparatively small to what it would have been had it not sustained the loss of some large branches towards the centre. Its venerable trunk is richly mantled with ivy, and its appearance altogether savours enough of antiquity to bear out the tradition annexed to it, that in the time of Henry the Fifth a fair was held annually under its branches; the high road from Rye, in Sussex, to London, then passing close by it. Nor will that interest, which must be felt for an object by associating it even in the most distant manner with a name so renowned in history as that of our fifth Henry, be lessened by the reflection, that this fine tree has for its present owner a descendant of John Hampden, and one in whom both the patriotic feeling and the private virtues of that illustrious individual find no unworthy representative.

PLATE VI.—THE TUTBURY WYCH-ELM.

THE WYCH-ELM, or Wych Hazel, as it is sometimes called, from the resemblance that its leaves and young shoots bear to those of the Hazel, is a species of the Elm, which is valuable rather for the quantity of its timber than the quality of it. Since the long bow, for the making of which it was much esteemed in former times, has fallen entirely into disuse, its worth is proportionally lessened. It is, however, a fine spreading tree, and grows occasionally to a prodigious size. The Tutbury Wych-Elm is one of the most remarkable specimens of the sort in the kingdom, and is thus mentioned by Shaw, in his History of Staffordshire:—"In the road leading from Tutbury to Rolleston is a very large and beautiful Wych-Elm, the bole of which is remarkably straight, thick and lofty; having eight noble branches, the size of common trees, which spread their umbrageous foliage luxuriantly around, forming a magnificent and graceful feature, both in the near and distant prospect. This, if not at present, will, in a few years, be as great a curiosity in the vegetable world, as the famous Wych-Elm at Field, described by Doctor Plot."

The trunk of this tree is twelve feet long, and sixteen feet nine inches in circumference, at the height of five feet from the ground; seven feet higher, it divides into the "eight noble branches," which are nearly fifty feet high and extend between forty and fifty feet from the centre of the tree, which contains six hundred and eighty-nine cubic feet of timber. The interest that so beautiful an object is likely to impart to the spot on which it stands is, in the present instance, increased by the pleasing prospect that it commands of Tutbury Castle; which lifts its venerable remains in the distance, and awakens a train of interesting reflections, connected with a remembrance of the virtues of one of its earliest owners, "Time-honored Lancaster," and of the vicissitudes to which it has been exposed, during the ages that have now left it only the vestige of what it was in the days of feudal greatness.

PLATE VII.—THE ENFIELD CEDAR.

THE Cedar of Lebanon has been generally supposed to be a native of Mount Libanus only, but modern travellers have found it on Mount Taurus and other elevated situations in the Levant; and it is so hardy, that it can easily adapt itself to any climate. It has not been much cultivated in England till of late years; although its quick growth, and its capability of thriving in a meagre soil, render it peculiarly desirable for those bleak and barren situations which have hitherto been principally devoted to the Fir.

The frequent and solemn allusions to the Cedar in Holy Writ, seem to give it something of a sacred character; which is increased by a knowledge of the esteem in which it was held by the ancients, on account of its fragrant scent, its incorruptible nature, and above all, its durability; insomuch that it is recorded, that in the temple of Apollo at Utica, there was found timber of Cedar nearly two thousand years old.

The Enfield Cedar stands in the garden of the Manor House, or old Palace, in Enfield; the occasional retirement of Queen Elizabeth before she came to the throne, and the frequent scene of her royal pleasures afterwards, in the early part of her reign. In the year 1660 it became the residence of the learned Doctor Uvedale, Master of the Grammar School of Enfield at that time, and famous for his curious gardens, and choice collection of exotics. The Cedar, which is now one of the finest in the kingdom, was put into the ground by him, a plant brought direct from Mount Libanus, probably by one of his scholars. In 1779 it measured fourteen feet six inches at the base, and forty-five feet nine inches in height, eight feet of the upper part having been broken off by a high wind in 1703. The principal branches extended in length from the stem, from twenty-eight to forty-five feet, and the contents of the tree, exclusive of the boughs, was about two hundred and ninety-three cubic feet. In the night of the fifth of November, 1794, it again suffered by a high wind, which, blowing furiously from the north-west, deprived it of the principal top branch, which fell with a tremendous crash, and injured several of the branches below in its fall. In 1821, Dr. May, its present proprietor, and the able Master of the Palace School at Enfield, took its measurement, which was as follows: seventeen feet in circumference at one foot from the ground; sixty-four feet in perpendicular height, and containing five hundred and forty-eight cubic feet of timber; exclusive of the branches, which from north-east to south-west extend eighty-seven feet, and contain about two hundred and fifty feet of timber; making in the whole nearly eight hundred cubic feet of timber.

Some years ago, this great ornament to Enfield was destined to be cut down by a gentleman who had purchased the spot on which it stands; but the contemplation of its loss excited so much regret and discontent among several of the most respectable inhabitants in the place, that he was obliged to relinquish the barbarous design; even after the trench was dug around it, the saw-pit prepared, and the axe almost lifted up for its destruction. An account of the whole proceeding, as well as a very minute one of the tree itself, is to be found in Dr. Robinson's valuable and interesting history of Enfield.

PLATE VIII.—THE YEW TREE AT ANKERWYKE.

THE Yew was formerly much esteemed in England, when the cross-bow was in use. Spenser praises it as

"The Eugh obedient to the bender's will;"

and that it had merited the reputation for many centuries, is evident from Virgil's mention of it for the same purpose:

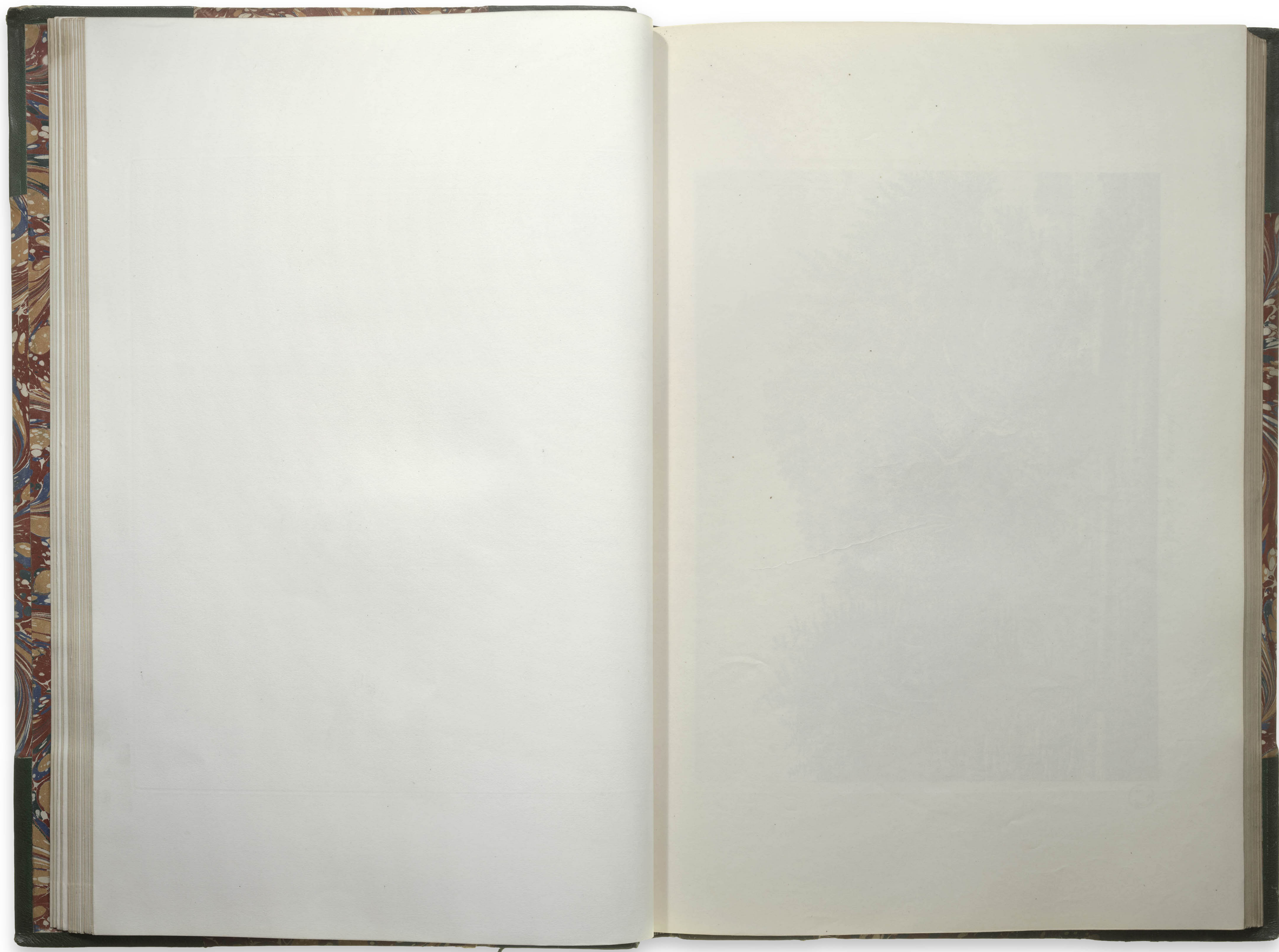
"—Ityrcos Taxi torquentur in arcus."

But as the use of fire-arms has superseded that of the bow, and as the improvements in modern taste have equally exploded the formal hedges and fantastical figures, for which the Yew was highly prized by the gardeners in Queen Elizabeth's time, it is no longer cultivated as it was in former ages; when it was enjoined to be planted in all Church-yards and cemeteries: partly to ensure its cultivation; partly to secure its leaves and seeds from doing injury to cattle; and partly because its unchanging foliage and durable nature made it a fit emblem of immortality; whilst, at the same time, its dark green rendered it not less aptly illustrative of the solemnity of the grave.



The Cedar in the Palace Garden at Enfield.

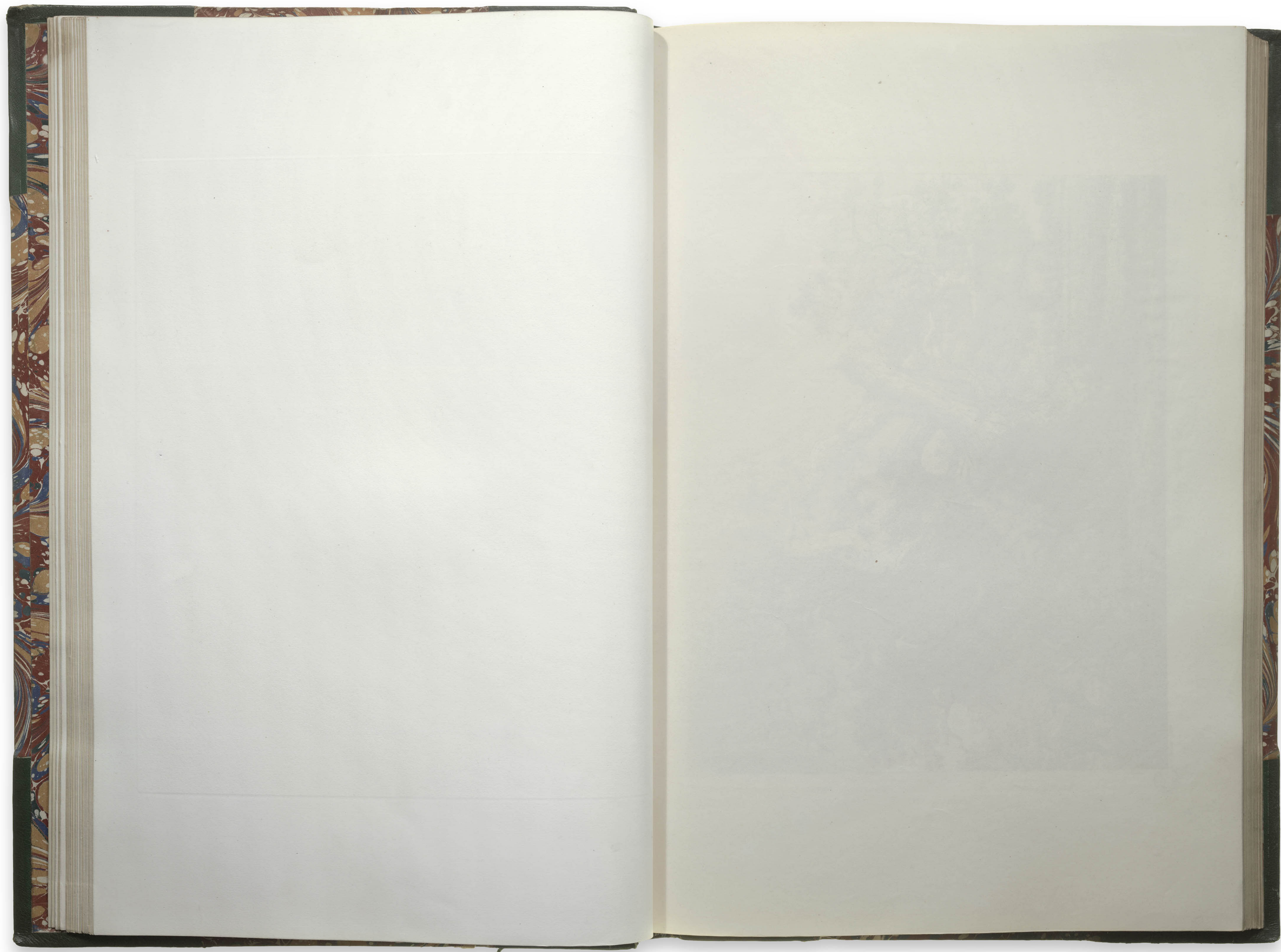
1854





The Yew Tree at Ashbury.

H. 48





The Silvery Forest Oak.

J. C. Smith. 1812.

The Yew-tree lives to a great age; indeed it can scarcely ever be said to die, new shoots perpetually springing out from the old and withered stock. The Yew-tree at Ankerwyke House, near Staines, the seat of John Blagrove, Esq., is supposed to have flourished there upwards of a thousand years. Tradition says, that Henry VIII. occasionally met Anne Boleyn under the lugubrious shade of its spreading branches, at such times as she was placed in the neighbourhood of Staines, in order to be near Windsor; whither the king used to love to retire from the cares of state. Ill-omened as was the place of meeting under such circumstances, it afforded but too appropriate an emblem of the result of that arbitrary and ungovernable passion, which, overlooking every obstacle in its progress, was destined finally to hurry its victim to an untimely grave. It is more pleasing, however, to view this tree as the silent witness of the conference of those brave barons who afterwards compelled King John to sign Magna Charta, in its immediate vicinity, between Runnymede and Ankerwyke House, than as the involuntary confidant of loves so unhallowed, and so unblest, as those of Henry and Anne Boleyn. Both events are happily alluded to in the following lines:

“What scenes have pass’d, since first this ancient Yew
In all the strength of youthful beauty grew!
Here patriot Barons might have musing stood,
And plann’d the Charter for their Country’s good;
And here, perhaps, from Runnymede retired,
The haughty John, with secret vengeance fired,
Might curse the day which saw his weakness yield
Extorted rights in yonder tented field.
Here too the tyrant Henry felt love’s flame,
And, sighing, breathed his Anna Boleyn’s name:
Beneath the shelter of this Yew-tree’s shade,
The royal lover woo’d the ill-starr’d maid:

And yet that neck, round which he fondly hung,
To hear the thrilling accents of her tongue;
That lovely breast, on which his head reclined,
Form’d to have humaniz’d his savage mind;
Were doom’d to bleed beneath the tyrant’s steel,
Whose selfish heart might dote, but could not feel.
O had the Yew its direst venom shed
Upon the cruel Henry’s guilty head,
Ere England’s sons with shuddering grief had seen
A slaughter’d victim in their beauteous queen!”

The girth of this tree, at three feet from the ground, is twenty-seven feet eight inches; at eight feet, thirty-two feet five inches. Immediately above the latter height there are five principal branches, which shoot out from the stem in a lateral direction; the respective girths of which are, five feet five inches; six feet ten inches; five feet seven inches; five feet seven inches; and five feet nine inches. Above these branches, the trunk measures in the girth twenty feet eight inches. At twelve feet from the ground various branches proceed in every direction, aspiring to the height of forty-nine feet six inches; and spreading their umbrage to the circumference of two hundred and seven feet.

PLATE IX.—THE SALCEY FOREST OAK.

This magnificent tree, still flourishing, even under apparent decay, stands in the forest of Salcey, in Northamptonshire; between the forests of Rockingham to the North, and of Whittlebury to the South-west, by which the woodland part of that county is divided into three main parcels. Of these, Salcey Forest is the smallest; being not more than a mile in breadth, and scarcely a mile and a half in length: but its verdant appearance, enlivened by the variety of spreading thorns, which spring among its majestic oaks, renders it, particularly in the beginning of the summer, when they put forth their white blossoms, and scent the air with their fragrance, a delightful haunt for the lovers of sylvan scenery. Camden speaks of it as a place set apart for game; and even in the present day, its numerous troops of fallow deer, its tempting copses, and picturesque herds of cattle, give it an animation not less attractive to the sportsman than to the painter.

The Oak which maintains so proud a pre-eminence over all its brethren in this forest, was, in 1794, according to the account of H. Rooke, Esq. F.S.A., in circumference at the bottom, where there are no spurs, forty-six feet ten inches; at one yard from the ground, twenty-four feet seven inches; at two yards, eighteen feet six inches; at three yards, sixteen feet two inches. The height within the hollow was at that time fourteen feet eight inches, and the height of the tree itself thirty-nine feet three inches. Of its age, a calculation may be formed from the following observations of the ingenious Thomas South, Esq., communicated in his fourth Letter on the growth of Oaks, addressed to the Bath Society. Speaking of an ancient hollow tree on Oakley Farm, he informs us, that about twenty years before the time of his writing, he had the curiosity to measure this tree. “Its head,” he proceeds to relate, “was as green and vigorous last summer, as it was at that time; and though hollow as a tub, it has increased in its measure some inches. Upon the whole, this bears every mark of having been a short-stemmed, branchy tree, of the first magnitude; spreading its arms in all directions round it. Its aperture is a small, ill-formed gothic arch, hewn out, or enlarged with an axe, and the bark now

curls over the wound—a sure sign that it continues growing: and hence it is evident, that the hollow oaks of enormous size recorded by antiquaries, did not obtain such bulk whilst sound; for the shell increases when the substance is no more. The blea, and the inner bark, receive annual tributes of nutritious particles, from the sap, in its progress to the leaves; and from thence acquire a power of extending the outer bark, and increasing its circumference slowly. Thus a tree, which at three hundred years old was sound, and five feet in diameter, like the Langley Oak, would, if left to perish gradually, in its thousandth year become a shell of ten feet diameter."

"Hence," says Mr. Rooke, "we find by this curious investigation of the growth of oaks, that a tree of about thirty feet in circumference may be supposed to have attained the age of a thousand years. Upon this calculation we may conclude, that the Great Saley Forest Oak, which is only within two inches of forty-seven feet in circumference, cannot be less than fifteen hundred years old."

PLATE X.—THE ABBOT'S OAK.

THIS tree stands in the front of the noble residence of His Grace the Duke of Bedford, at Woburn Abbey. It does not appear to have found the soil favourable to its growth, as, though of considerable age, it is small in its dimensions, and to a fanciful imagination it might seem that it had refused to extend its branches, after having been compelled to bear upon them, according to a tradition on which its chief interests depends, the venerable Abbot of the monastery, under whose protecting walls it had been reared; and who, together with the Vicar of Puddington, was hanged at Woburn, in the year 1537, by order of Henry VIII., for refusing to give up his monastery, according to the decree of that rapacious and arbitrary monarch. "Roger Hobbs," says Dodds, in his History of Woburn, "the Abbot at that time, nobly disdaining to compromise his conscience for a pension, as the most of his brethren then did, and as many others, who do not wear a cowl, do in the *present* day, resolutely denied the King's supremacy, and refused to surrender his sacerdotal rights. For this contumacious conduct he was, in 1537, together with the Vicar of Puddington, in this county, and others who opposed the requisition, hanged on an Oak Tree in the front of the monastery, which is standing in the present day. He was drawn to the place of execution in a sledge, as is the custom with state prisoners." p. 88. Stowe thus mentions the fate of the Abbot of Woburn, along with that of others of his clerical brethren, in the same cause. 1537—"The 10th of March, John Paslow, bachelor of Divinitie, then being the five and twentieth Abbot of the Abbey of Whalley in Lincolnshire, was executed at Lancaster. More about the same time, the Abbot of Sawley, in Lancashire, with one Astbebe, a Monk of Gervaux, was executed. Also Robert Hops, Abbot of Woborne in Bedfordshire, with the Prior of the same house, and the Parson of Puddington, were executed at Woborne."

Chronicle: folio, 1681. p. 474.

These historical facts lose nothing of their interest by the following beautiful allusions to them in the lines of a poet, whose effusions have been already too favourably received by the public, to require apology for inserting any of them in this place.

O 'twas a ruthless deed, enough to pale
Freedom's bright fires, that doom'd to shameful death,
Those who mutin'd their faith with latest breath,
And scorn'd before the despot's frown to quail!
Yet 'twas a glorious hour, when from the gaol
Of papal tyranny the mind of man
Dared to break loose, and triumph'd in the ban
Of thunders roaring on the distant gale!

Yes, old memorial of the mitred monk,
Thou livest to flourish in a brighter day,
With seeming joy, and pure and patriot vows
Are breathed where Superstition reign'd—thy trunk
Its glad green garlands wears, though in decay,
And pious red-breasts warble from thy boughs,—

J. W. WIFFEN.

PLATE XI.—THE CHANDOS OAK.

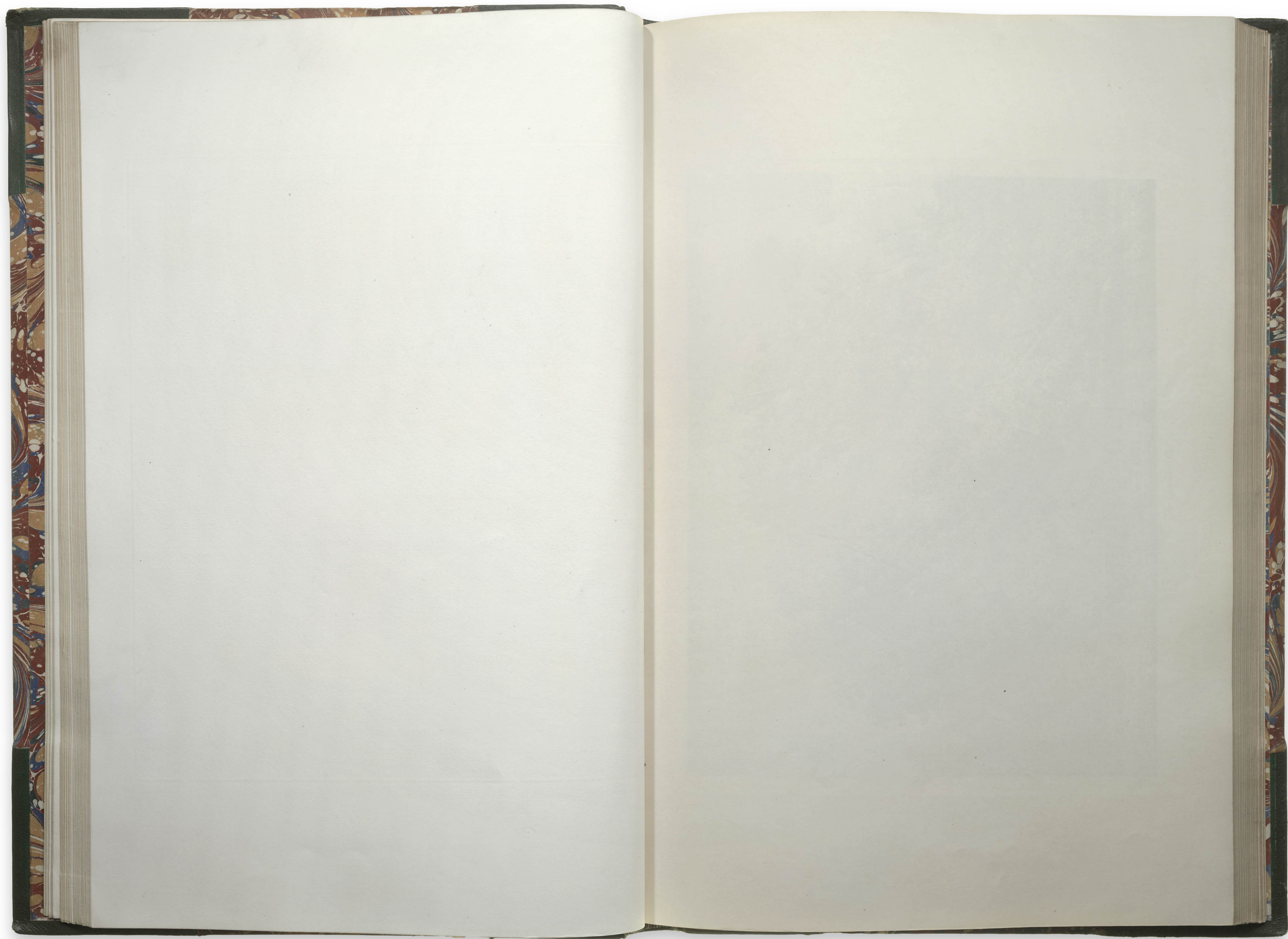
THIS luxuriant tree stands in the pleasure-grounds of Michendon House, at Southgate, the property of His Grace the Duke of Buckingham. Its girth at one foot from the ground is eighteen feet three inches; at three feet, it is fifteen feet nine inches. The height of the stem to the branches is eight feet; and at that distance



The Abbot's Oak at Wharfedale

J. O. Smith 1822

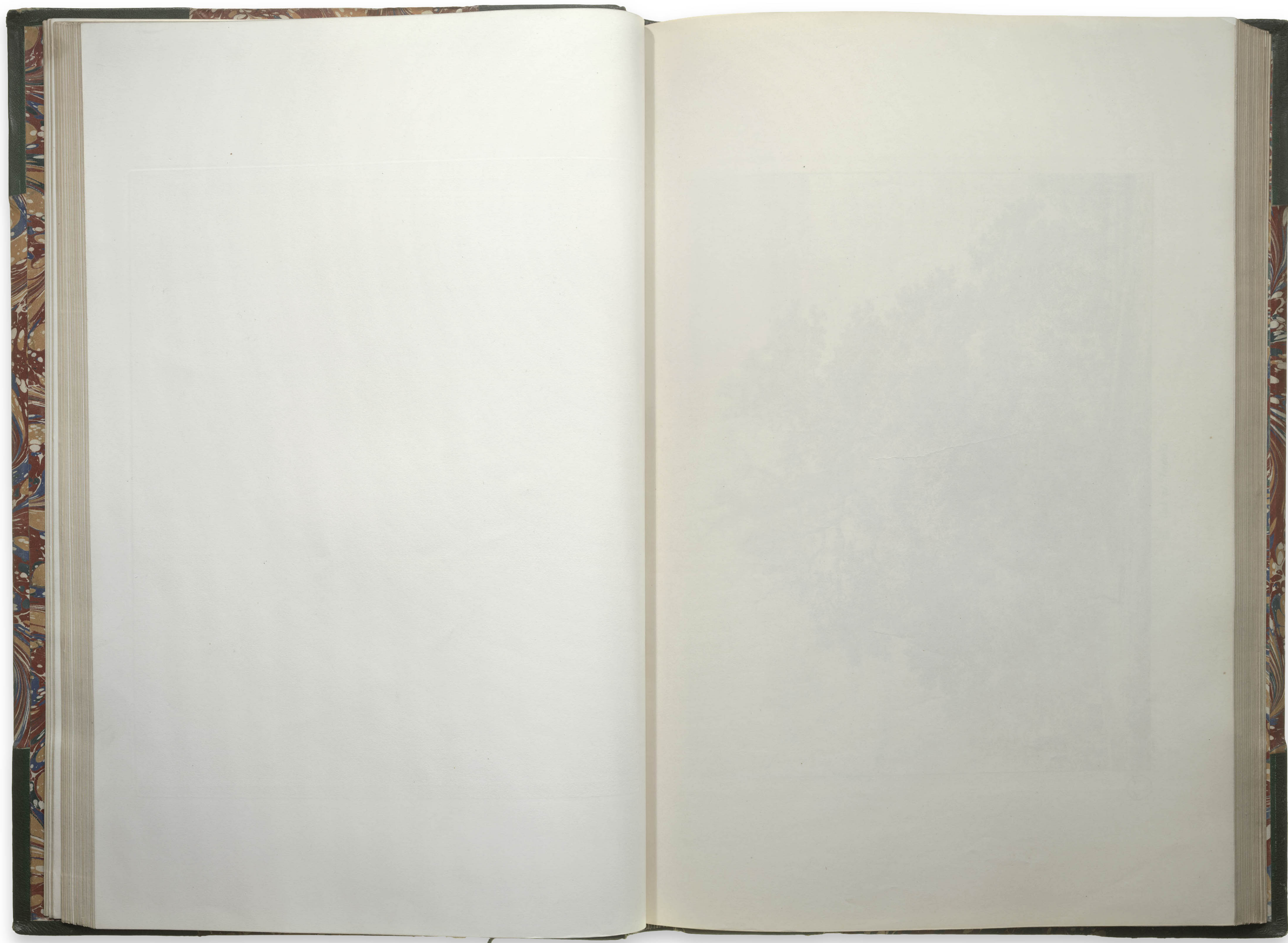
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The Chandler Oak

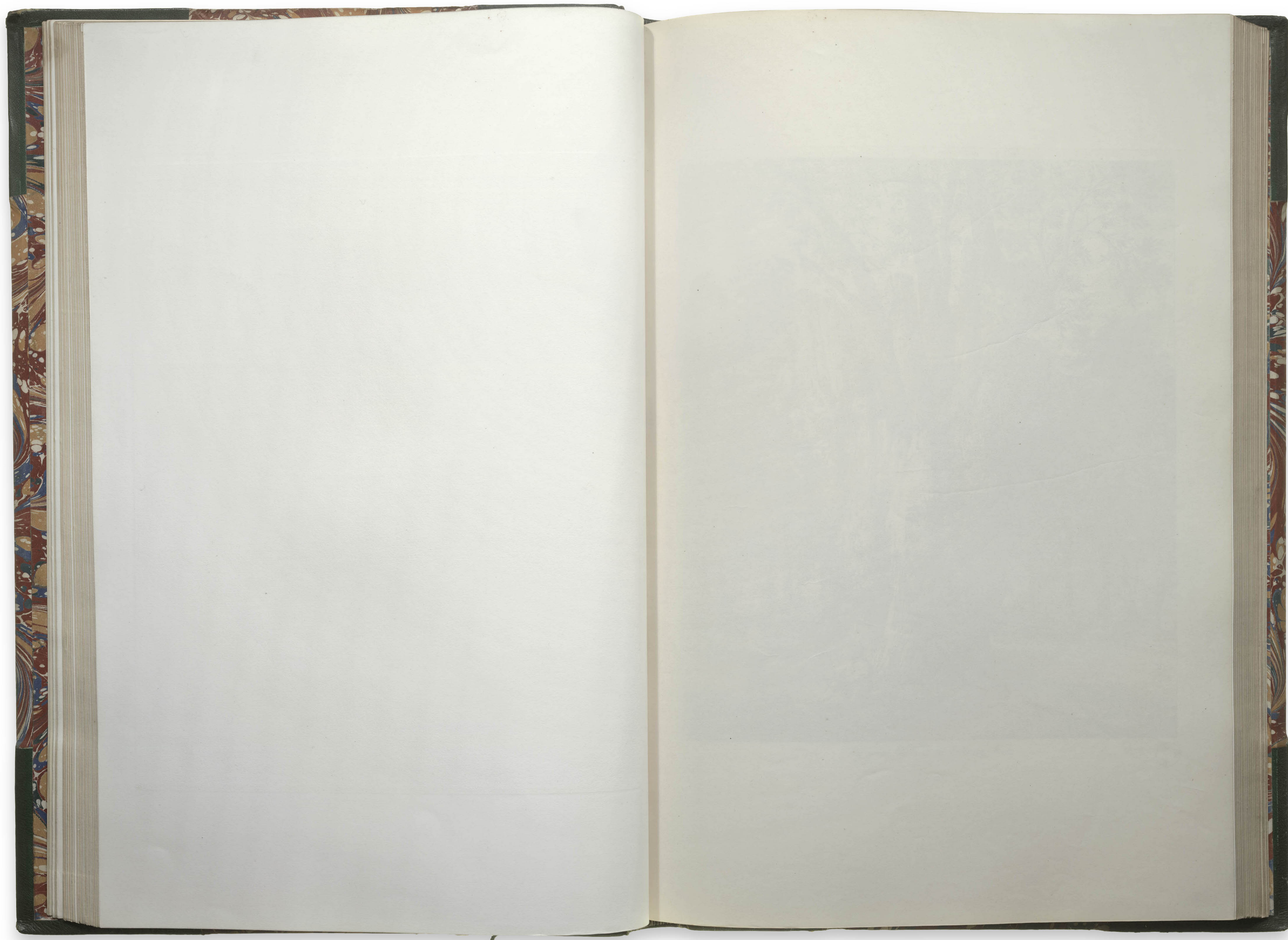
52





Cock at Fredville

1848





J. G. Smith

The great Chestnut in Cobham Park.



from the ground it is seventeen feet in girth. It is sixty feet in height, and the extremity of its boughs includes a line of one hundred and eighteen feet. It is in this last particular that its great attraction consists. When it is in the full pride of its foliage, it strikes the spectator with sensations similar to those inspired by the magnificent Banyan trees of the East. Its boughs bending to the earth, with almost artificial regularity of form and equidistance from each other, give it the appearance of a gigantic tent; with verdant draperies, drawn up to admit the refreshing breezes that curl the myriads of leaves, which form all together, what may be called a living mass of vegetable beauty and grandeur, scarcely to be equalled by any other production of the same nature in the kingdom. If, however, in the full pride of summer, this tree presents so refreshing a spectacle of breathing coolness, and amplitude of shade, it affords a still more singular and striking one in the invigorating sharpness of an autumnal morning; when its thousand boughs, and every pendent twig, are gemmed with crystals, reflecting the rays which no longer scorch, and dazzle only to please. The following lines, inspired by contemplating it under this aspect, and written beneath the branches thus clothed in icicles, whose brief glories were rapidly melting away before an ascending sun, will not, it is presumed, be unacceptable to the lover of fanciful imagery and harmonious numbers.

WHERE now my spirit lapp'd in dreaming mood,
I verily might think, majestic tree!
That I (for Kate is near) in company
Of some most fair and beauteous Naiad stood
In her own temple, 'neath the fountain flood;
In her own temple, roof'd all gorgeously
With jem and chrysolite—or, I might be
Embower'd with Fairy-queen in magic wood,

The small leaves raining down a silver light,
About our couch—or, under ceiling bright,
Starr'd with the twinklings of ten thousand eyes,
Such as illumine the Hour's paradise;
Or else—but ah! so wondrous fair the sight,
That fancy in the unfinished effort dies!

PLATE XII.—THE FREDVILLE OAK, BEAUTY.

THIS is one of the three Oaks belonging to John Plumtre, Esq., described in the fourth page of this work, wherein the dimensions of it are also given. It is distinguished by the name of Beauty, from its sisters, Majesty and Stately. "Is it not a pity," says Sir Edward Harley, speaking of some ancient trees of his own, "that such goodly creatures should be devoted to Vulcan?" No such fate, however, attends this graceful trio; and the pleasure with which the spectator views their different characteristics, is heightened by a sense that they are likely to remain protected and cherished, equally in their decay, as in their prime.

PLATE XIII.—THE CHESNUT TREE CALLED THE FOUR SISTERS.

THE Chesnut is indigenous to England, and will thrive in almost any soil, and any situation. In variety of usefulness its timber equals, and in some respects excels, that of the Oak. Its luxuriance of foliage, and feathered stems, render it conspicuous among all other trees for beauty; and its fruit might, by proper management, be made a valuable article of food, in this country, as it is in France and Italy, where it is subjected to a variety of culinary processes, that convert it into delicacies for the tables of the luxurious, and into nutritious bread for the humbler classes.

The Chesnut sometimes grows to a prodigious size. Evelyn speaks of one in Gloucestershire which contained "within the bowels of it, a pretty wainscoted room, enlightened with windows, and furnished with seats," &c.; but the largest known in the world is upon Mount Etna, in Sicily. This tree, which goes by the name of *Castagno de Cento Cavalli*, is described by Brydone, who went to see it, through five or six miles of almost impassable forests which grew out of the lava, as having the appearance of five large trees growing together; but upon a more accurate examination, strengthened by the assurances of scientific persons, he became inclined to believe that they had been formerly united in one solid stem, and on measuring the hollow space within, he found it two hundred and four feet round. Carrera's assertion that there was wood enough in that one tree to build a large palace, can, therefore, scarcely be regarded as an exaggeration.

The Chesnut tree, called the Four Sisters, from its four branching stems closely combined in one massive trunk, stands in the Heronry, in the finely-wooded park at Cobham Hall, the ancient seat of the illustrious family of that name, so well known in English History, and now the property of John fourth Earl of Darnley. It is the noble remains of a most magnificent tree; and though its head has paid forfeit to the "skyeey influences" and a long succession of revolving seasons, yet it is not left entirely stripped of ornament in its old age; as a number of tender shoots spring out of its topmost branches, and still give it, by the lightness of their foliage, an appearance of freshness, of which its aged trunk would almost forbid the expectation. It is thirty-five feet two inches in circumference at the ground, avoiding the spurs; twenty-nine feet at three feet from the ground; thirty-three feet at twelve feet from the ground; and forty feet at the point where the trunk divides.

PLATE XIV.—THE BEECH TREE AT KNOLE.

THERE is no tree with which more classical and pleasing associations are connected than the Beech; the very mention of it recalls Virgil's

*"Tilgæ, tu patula recubans sub tegmine fagi
Silestem tenui Musam meditaris avena;"*

and a thousand images of rural life, of rustic lovers carving their mistresses' name on its silver bark, of tuneful shepherds disputing for bowls of its wood, valued, when curiously carved, almost as much as if of precious metal, all spring into the imagination.

The Beech, however, has more solid claims on admiration than those which merely affect the fancy. It is a valuable as well as a beautiful tree; for though its wood, on account of being exceedingly subject to be worm-eaten, is not so fit as the Elm or Walnut for purposes where durability is requisite, it is yet much used for household furniture, and instruments of husbandry, and, when kept under water, is little inferior in ship-building to the Elm itself. The Beech will grow in the most stony and barren soils; and, as a shelter in exposed situations, it is particularly desirable, on account of retaining its glittering leaves till the very end of autumn, and, indeed, many of them throughout the winter;—changing their delicate green for the more appropriate red. In the spring, its foliage, feathering almost to the ground, is exquisitely beautiful; and its fantastic roots, immortalized by Gray, in his celebrated Elegy, are frequently covered with wild flowers. Swine, deer, and the smaller quadrupeds, tenants of the hollow trees—such as the squirrel, mouse, and dormouse, greedily fatten upon its mast, which is likewise capable of being converted into bread and oil for the human race; and its leaves afford the most agreeable mattresses, continuing sweet and tender for seven or eight years together, and are enlized by Evelyn, from his own experience, for their refreshing softness. It must, however, be acknowledged, that its shades are more favourable to the traveller and the shepherd than to corn or grass; and that it is of that encroaching and dominant nature, that a wood which may be originally in equal proportions of Oak and Beech, will in course of time become entirely beechen.

The Park at Knole, in Kent, the magnificent seat of the Duchess Dowager of Dorset and Earl Whitworth, abounds in fine Beeches, of which the one represented in the accompanying plate is a noble specimen. Its "limbs of giant mould" start from the parent trunk in rival greatness, and give it the appearance of a lofty structure of clustering pillars raised by the genii of the wood—a fit residence for some sylvan deity.

The circumference of this fine tree, at three feet from the ground, is twenty-four feet; at ten feet it is twenty-seven. It rises to the height of one hundred and five feet; in extent of boughs is one hundred and twenty-three, and contains four hundred and ninety-eight feet of solid timber.

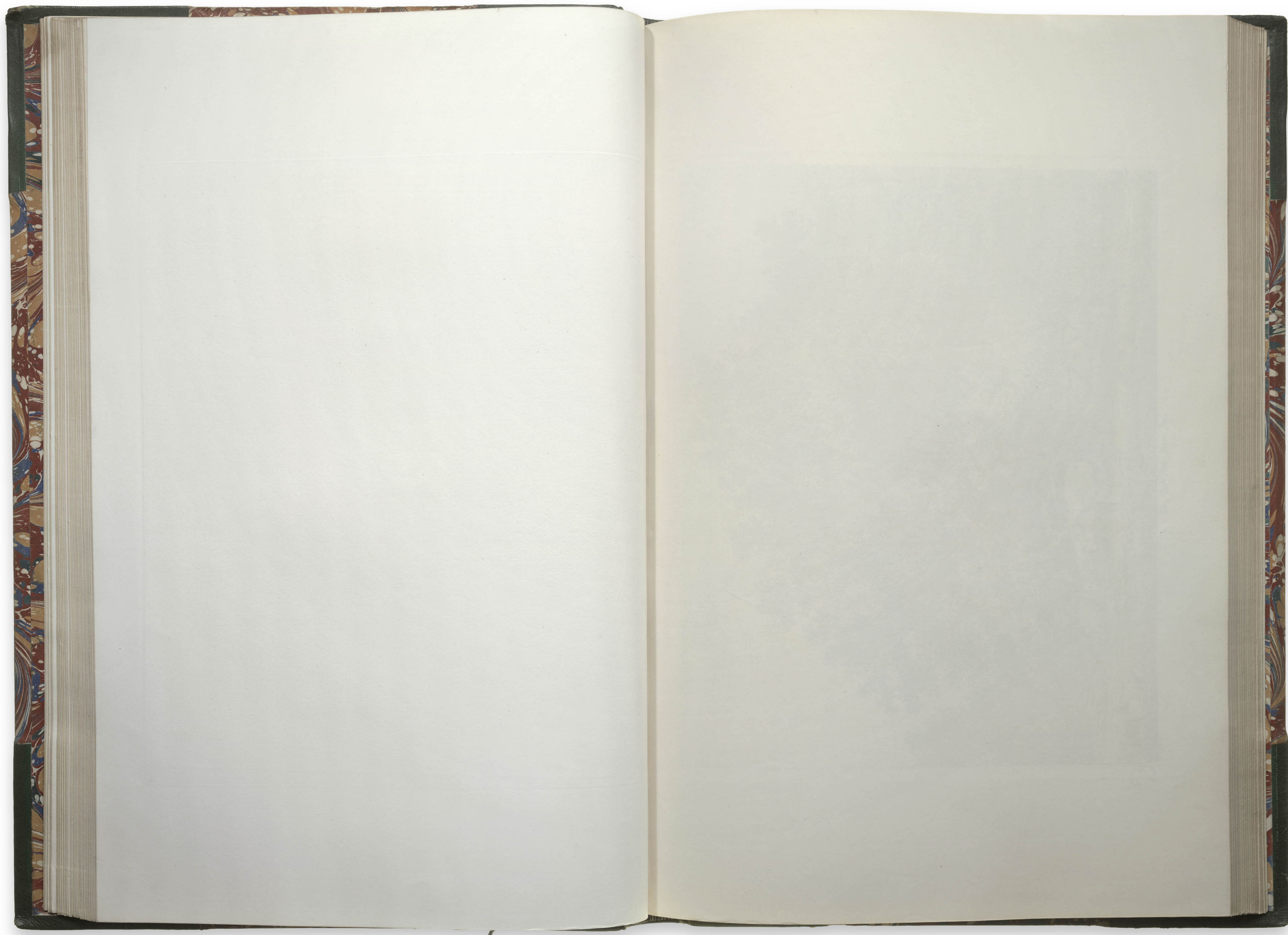
PLATE XV.—THE MOOR PARK LIME TREE.

THE Lime Tree, or Linden, is said to have been introduced into England from Germany in the reign of Elizabeth, by Sir John Spelman, to whom we are also indebted for the introduction of the manufactory of paper.



Beech in Knole Park.

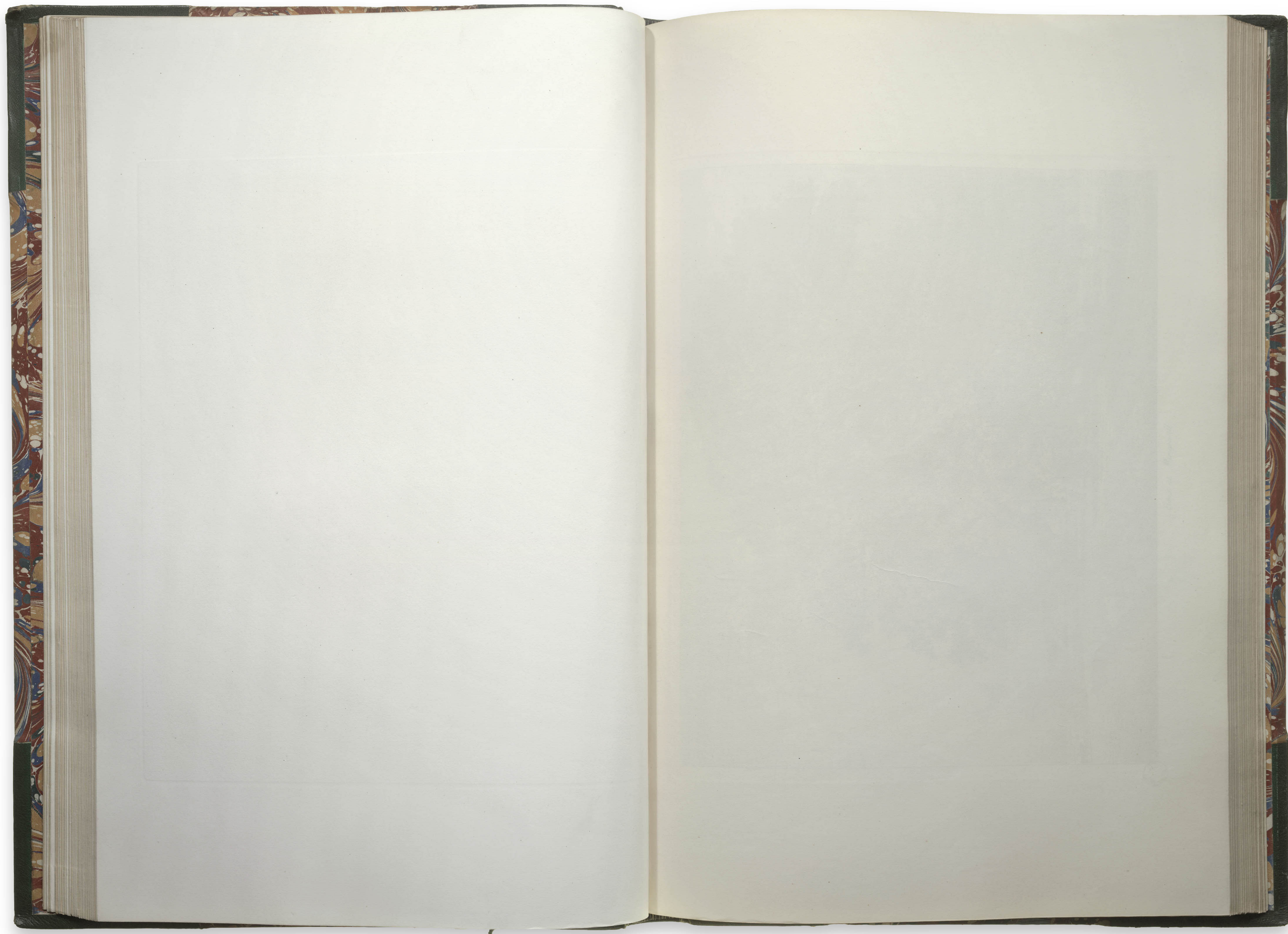
Pl. 20





The River Bank, Lyme Regis

W. J. Smith





Elms at Monmouth

5

It is not, however, so much cultivated in this as in many other countries, particularly in Germany and Switzerland, where there are some of the largest in the world; and in Holland, where they not only shelter and adorn the highways, but are planted in many towns in even lines before the houses, throughout the streets, filling the air with the fragrance of their blossoms, and screening the passengers from the sun, with the luxuriance of their shade. It is peculiarly adapted for avenues, from the straightness of its stem, and the luxuriant spreading of its branches, which are likewise so tough as to withstand the fury of gales that would dismember most other trees. The red-twigged Lime is preferable for this purpose in point of beauty, on account of the pleasing spectacle which the red twigs afford in the absence of its leaves.

The Lime Tree can accommodate itself to almost any kind of ground; but in a rich loamy soil it grows with almost incredible swiftness, and spreads to an amazing size. Evelyn thus describes some of the giants of this species: "But here does properly intervene the Linden of Schalouse in Swisse, under which is a lower composed of its branches, capable of containing three hundred persons sitting at ease: it has a fountain set about with many tables, formed only of the boughs, to which they ascend by steps, all kept so accurately, and so very thick, that the sun never looks into it. But this is nothing to that prodigious Tilia of Neustadt, in the Duchy of Wirtemberg, so famous for its monstrosity, that even the city itself receives a denomination from it, being called by the Germans *Neustadt under grossen Linden*, or Neustadt by the great Lime Tree. The circumference of the trunk is twenty-seven feet four fingers; the ambitus, or extent of the boughs, four hundred and three *ferè*; the diameter, from south to north one hundred and forty-five, from east to west one hundred and nineteen feet; set about with divers columns and monuments of stone, (eighty-two in number at present, and formerly above a hundred more,) which several Princes and Noble Persons have adorned, and celebrated with inscriptions, arms, and devices; and which, as so many pillars, serve likewise to support the unbragous and venerable boughs; and that even the tree had been much ampler, the ruins and distances of the columns declare, which the rude soldiers have greatly impaired."—Discourse on Forest Trees, p. 493. edit. 1776.

Leaving, however, these "monstrosities," as Evelyn styles them, we may turn with perhaps more real interest to the beautiful specimen of the Lime Tree afforded us in Moor-Park, Hertfordshire, the family seat of Robert Williams, Esq.; a place venerable for its antiquity, and familiar to the lovers of gardening by Sir William Temple's eulogium on it, as affording in his time the most perfect combination of garden elegance and utility in England. This tree, standing upon a little eminence, finely terminates a row of stately Limes which bound one side of the Park for more than three quarters of a mile; all of which are more lofty and some of larger girth than this; but none equalling it in luxuriance of shade, and redundancy of branches, nineteen of which, almost rivalling the parent stem, have, at about nine feet from the ground, struck out in horizontal lines to the length of from sixty-seven to seventy-one feet, and from six to eight feet in circumference, bearing again in their turn three or four upright limbs, like so many young trees, and reminding the beholder of prosperous colonies, at once supported by, and adding to the importance of, their mother country. Its age is not exactly known; but it is at this present period in the most vigorous state of luxurious growth, and has every promise of attaining a much larger size. Its circumference on the ground is twenty-three feet three inches; at three feet above, it is seventeen feet six inches; its branches extend one hundred and twenty-two feet in diameter, and cover three hundred and sixty feet in circumference. It is nearly a hundred feet in height, and contains, by actual measurement, eight hundred and seventy-five feet of saleable timber.

PLATE XVI.—THE ELMS AT MONGEWELL.

THESE noble trees are close to the residence of the Bishop of Durham, whose property they are, at Mongewell in Oxfordshire, celebrated by Leland for its "faire woodes," and forcibly recall to the mind of the beholder Cowper's eulogium on shades so natural and delightful.

"Our fathers knew the value of a screen
From sultry suns, and in their shaded walks
And long protracted bowers enjoyed, at noon,
The gloom and coolness of declining day."

The principal tree among them is seventy-nine feet in height, fourteen in circumference at three feet from

the ground, sixty-five in extent of boughs, and contains two hundred and fifty-six feet of solid timber. About the centre of the group stands an urn with the following inscription:

To the Memory
Of my
Two Highly Valued Friends,
Thomas Tyrwhitt, Esq.
And
The Rev. C. M. Cracherode, M.A.
In this once favour'd walk, beneath these Elms,
Whose thicken'd foliage, to the solar ray
Impervious, sheds a venerable gloom,
Oft in instructive converse we beguiled
The fervid time which each returning year
To friendship's call devoted. Such things were;
But are, alas! no more.

S. DUNELM.

Pleasing as it always is to see worth and genius paying tribute to kindred associations, it is particularly so in the present instance, from the illustrious Prelate who, in these lines, hands down the names of his friends to posterity, and whom it is most delightful to contemplate amidst shades with which he is almost coeval, being at this time in his ninetieth year, and which in freshness and tranquillity are emblems of his own green and venerable old age.

PLATE XVII.—THE SHELTON OAK.

THIS stately tree stands on the road-side, where the Pool road diverges from that which leads to Oswestry, about a mile and a half from Shrewsbury; whose spires form a pleasing object in the distance, whilst above them, the famous mountain called the Wrekin lifts its head, and inspires a thousand social recollections, as the well-known toast, that includes all friends around its ample base, is brought to mind by the sight of its lofty summit. The appearance of the Shelton Oak, hollow throughout its trunk, and with a cavity towards the bottom capable of containing at least half a score persons, sufficiently denotes its antiquity. Tradition informs us, that just before the famous battle of Shrewsbury, June 21, 1403, headed on one side by Henry the IVth in person, and on the other by the gallant Henry Percy, surnamed Hotspur, Owen Glendower, the powerful Welsh Chieftain, and the firm adherent of the English Insurgents, ascended this tree, and from its lofty branches, then most probably in the full pride of their vigour, reconnoitred the state of the field: when finding that the King was in great force, and that the Earl of Northumberland had not joined his son Henry, he descended from his leafy observatory with the prudent resolution of declining the combat, and retreated with his followers to Oswestry. This caution seems scarcely in character with the fierce and heedless courage of

"The irregular and wild Glendower,"

whose martial daring is well portrayed by our great dramatic poet, in Hotspur's account of his combat with "the noble Mortimer;" of whom he says:

"To prove that true,
Needs no more but one tongue for all those wounds,
Those mouthed wounds, which valiantly he took,
When on the gentle Severn's sedgey bank,
In single opposition, hand to hand,
He did confound the best part of an hour
In changing hardiment with great Glendower.

Three times they breathed and three times did they drink,
Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood;
Who then, affrighted with their bloody looks,
Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds,
And hid his crisp head in the hollow bank,
Blood-stained with these valiant combatants."

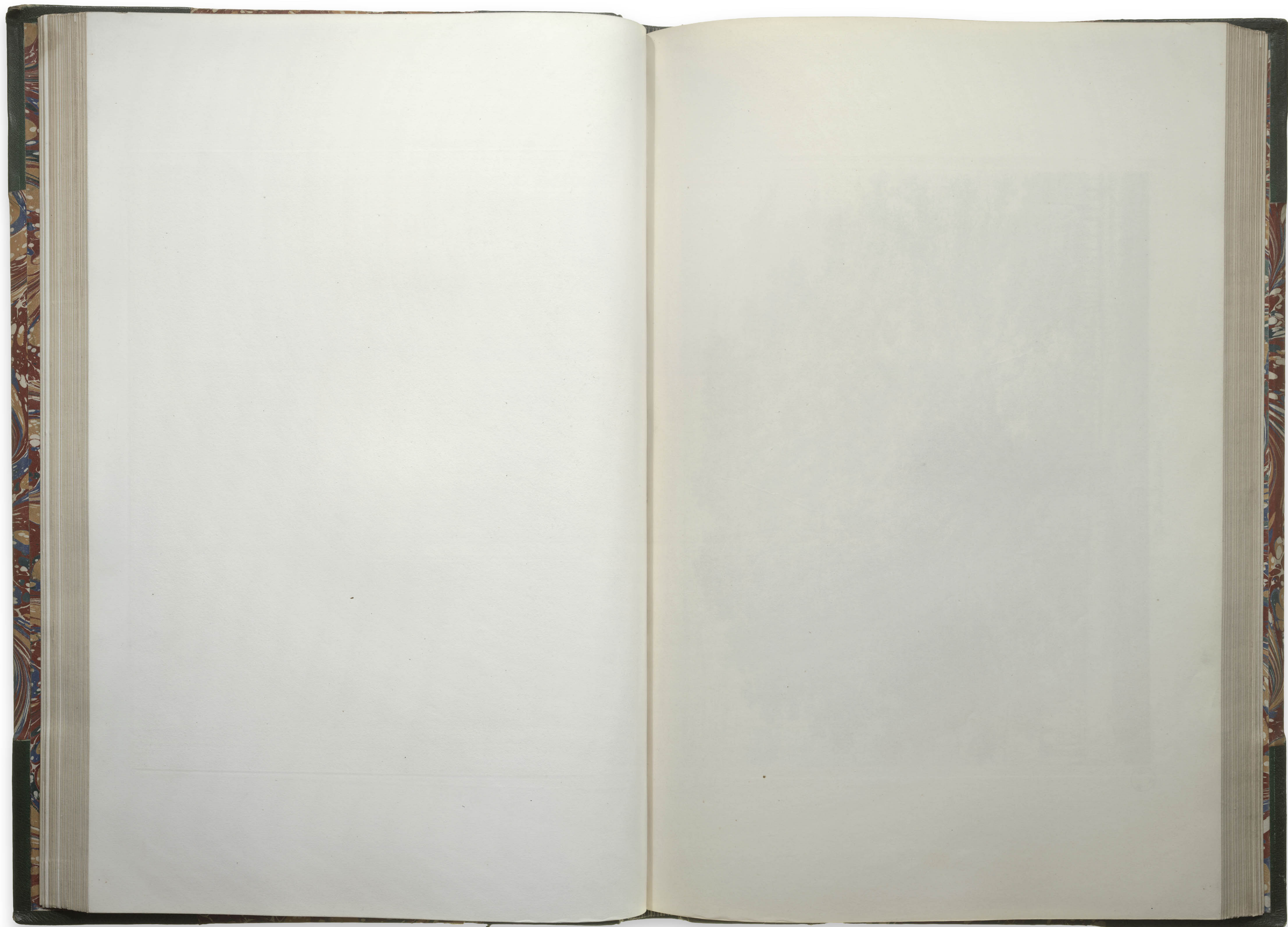
KING HENRY IV, 1st part, a. 1. sc. 3.

The great age of the Shelton Oak, thus pointed out by the tradition which connects it with the name of Glendower, is likewise attested by legal documents belonging to Richard Hill Waring, Esq., whose ancestors possessed lands in Shelton, and the neighbourhood, in the reign of Henry III.; probably deriving them from Waring, son of Athef, a Saxon, who had land in the market-place of Shrewsbury, before the use of dates was known. Among this gentleman's title-deeds is the following paper, inscribed, "per me Adam Waring," and entitled, "How the grette Oake at Shelton standeth on my gronde."



The Shetton Oak

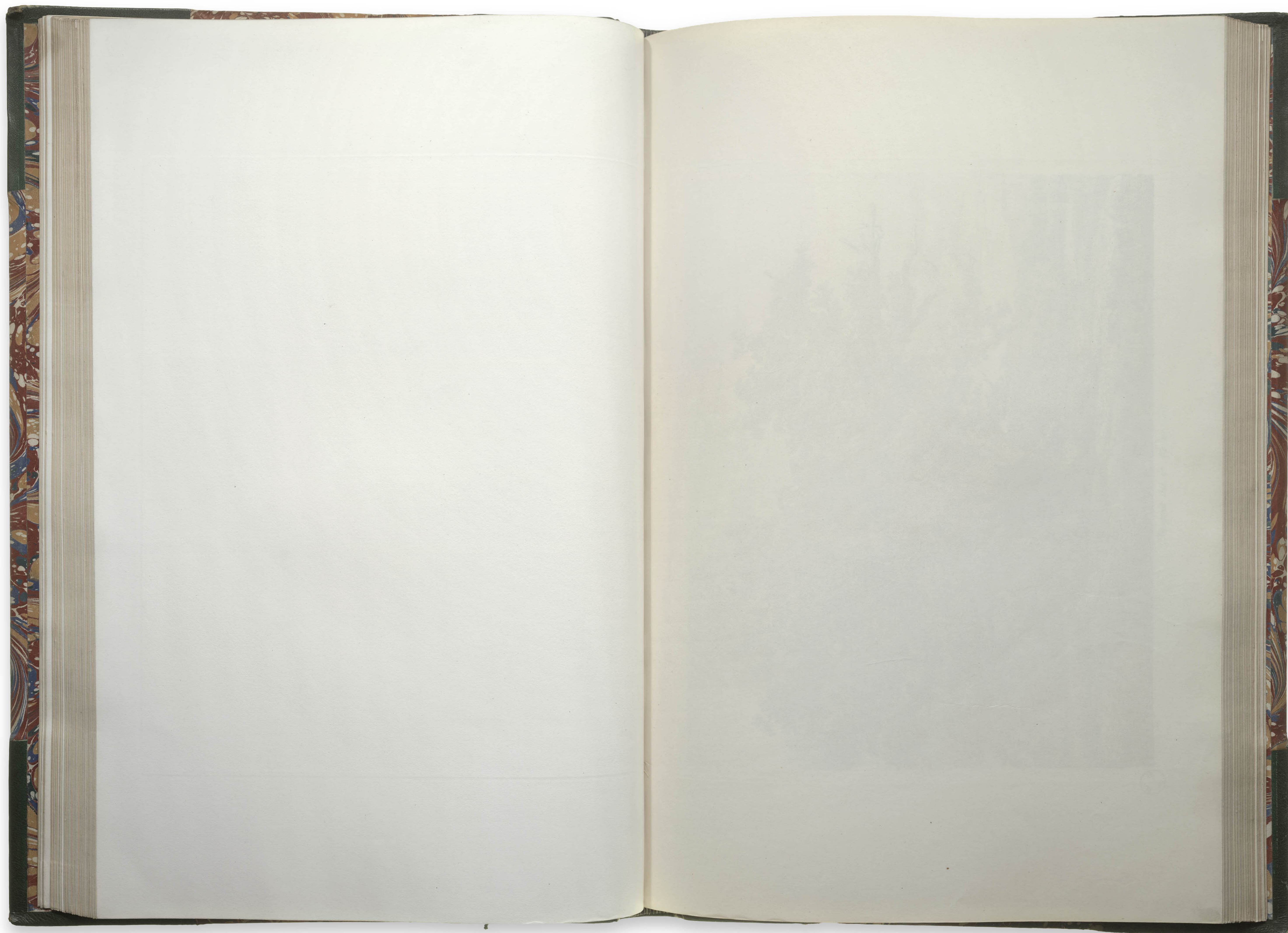
M. Ex.
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The Bounds Park Oak.

24





The great Oak at Morcas Court

Pl. 3

"M^r. that Thomas Davis my tennaunt at Shelton told me in Shelton's fyld comyng from Bycketon the iiiiith day of Aprell a^d. 1543, before W^m. Tydde' theld' dwelling at or by Wodecote—That he hathe hard his fad^r. and other auneynt men dwellyng in Shelton (where the said Thom^s. now dwelleth) unto the m^rckett and fylds etc. was throughe the grounde that is now the folde or courte ageanste the gret mansion there; belong now to ric. Mytton, esquier, and of him holden by Nycolas Purell of Salop, and for farther aparens thereof the pavement of the said courte extendyng from my said house in Shelton towards the highe strote of the said tounne.

"Farther he saythe, that by cause the grounde wherby *the said gret oke* standeth is moche more neare r waye and handson' onto the moost of the said filds of Shelton, m^rckett mylle, and moost of y^e convenient places to resort to, and for that con lande of grounde belongyng to my said house stode right and next to the folde southe east ende of my saide house—which said lande of grounde did lye and dothe streight upon the said gret oke," &c.

This extract will suffice to prove that the Shelton Oak was esteemed *a great* one within 140 years of the battle of Shrewsbury, and an object of remark to old people *long before* that period.

The circumference of this tree at one foot and a half from the ground is thirty-seven feet, and at five feet from the ground it is twenty-six feet.

PLATE XVIII.—THE BOUNDS-PARK OAK

This beautiful tree stands in the full pride of symmetry and vigour, in Bounds-Park, near Tunbridge, the residence of the Earl of Caledon; from the windows of whose mansion it presents an object perpetually tempting the eye to admire the elegance of its form, and the redundancy of its foliage. To the casual observer of nature the view of one tree may seem much like the view of another; and that a forest itself is more calculated to strike the imagination by the greatness of its aggregate, than to interest it by the variety of its detail: but it is very different with the ardent contemplatist of Nature; with him, as is well observed by St. Pierre, (himself an unwearyed admirer of her charms,) "every tree has an expression of its own, and every group has its concert." He loves to trace in each individual specimen, its peculiar anatomy and character. Every winding branch, and every shooting stem, has a charm for him; and he is interested throughout each stage of the existence of these wonderful vegetable structures, from the tender sapling, to the leafless withered trunk.

The age of the Bounds-Park Oak is not known; but it appears to be in its prime, and zenith of perfection, and bids fair to ornament the spot on which it stands for several centuries to come. Its circumference, at two feet above the ground, is twenty-two feet; at twelve feet, where the stem divides, it is sixteen feet nine inches. It is sixty-nine feet in height; and the extent of the boughs from east to west is one hundred and fourteen feet, and the solid contents of the tree are eight hundred and ninety-two feet.

PLATE XIX.—THE MOCCAS-PARK OAK.

This ancient tree, which at three feet from the ground is thirty-six feet in circumference, is in the Park of Moccas Court, on the banks of the Wye, in Herefordshire, the seat of Sir George Amyand Corneswall, Bart., who traces his ancestry from Richard, second son of King John, Earl of Cornwall, and King of the Romans. The estate is fraught with historical associations, which extend themselves with pleasing interest to this ancient "monarch of the wood," among whose boughs the war-cry has often reverberated in former ages, and who has witnessed many a fierce contention for the domains on which he still stands, in venerable, though decaying majesty, surrounded by aged denizens of the forest, the oldest of whom, nevertheless, compared with himself, seem but as of yesterday.

PLATE XX.—THE WOTTON OAK.

THIS Tree is in the park of Wotton, under Bernwood, a seat belonging to his Grace the Duke of Buckingham. It measures twenty-five feet in circumference, at one foot from the ground, and at the height of twelve feet divides into four large limbs, the principal of which is fifteen feet in circumference. It rises to the height of about ninety feet, and covers an area of fifty yards in diameter with its branches, recalling to the mind of the spectator Virgil's magnificent description of a similar object:

—que, quantum vertice ad auras
Ætherias, tantum radice in Tartara tendit.
Ergo non hyemes illam, non flabra, neque imbres
Convellunt: immota manet; multosque nepotes,
Multa virum volvens durando sæcula vincit.
Tum fortes late ramos et brachia tendens
Huc illic, media ipsa ingentem sustinet umbram.

—whose roots descend
As low towards Pluto's realms, as high in air
Its massive branches rise. The utmost rage
Of wintry storms howls o'er its strength in vain.
Successive generations of mankind,
Revolving ages, flourish and decay,
Yet still immovable it stands, and throws
Its vigorous limbs around, and proudly bears
With firm and solid trunk its stately form,
A mighty canopy of thickest shade.

VIRGIL, *Georg.* ii. 291.

PLATE XXI.—THE YEW TREES AT FOUNTAINS' ABBEY

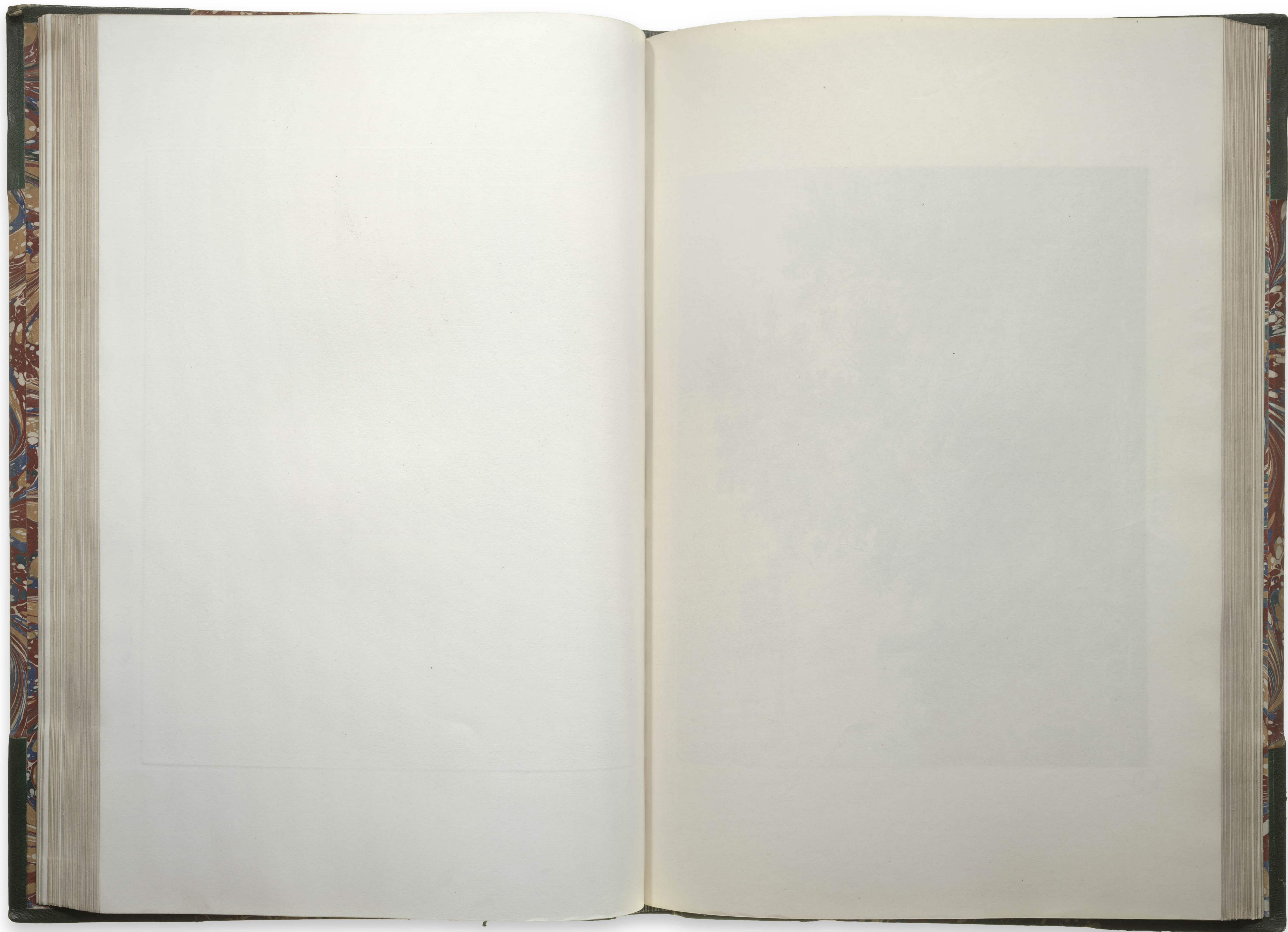
THESE remarkable Yew Trees stand on a small eminence at Studley Royal, near Ripon, overlooking the ruins of Fountains' Abbey, which celebrated monastery was founded about the end of the year 1132, by Thurstan, Archbishop of York, for certain Monks whose consciences being too tender to allow them to indulge in the relaxed habits of their own order, made them desirous of following the more rigorous rule of the Cistercians' founded by the celebrated Saint Bernard, and then lately introduced into England. Of the origin of Fountains' Abbey, as the date of these Yew Trees is particularly connected with it, the following account from Burton may not be deemed unacceptable:

"At Christmas, the Archbishop, being at Ripon, assigned to the Monks some land in the patrimony of St. Peter, about three miles west of that place, for the erecting of a monastery. The spot of ground had never been inhabited, unless by wild beasts, being overgrown with wood and brambles, lying between two steep hills and rocks, covered with wood on all sides, more proper for a retreat for wild beasts than for the human species. This was called Skeldale, that is, the Vale of Skell, a rivulet running through it from the west to the eastward part of it. The Archbishop also gave to them a neighbouring village called Sutton. Richard, the Prior of St. Mary's, at York, was chosen Abbot by the Monks, being the first of this monastery of Fountains; with whom they withdrew into this uncouth desert, without any house to shelter them in that winter season, or provisions to subsist on, but entirely depending on Divine Providence. There stood a large Elm in the midst of the vale, on which they put some thatch or straw, and under that they lay, eat, and prayed; the Bishop for a time supplying them with bread, and the rivulet with drink. Part of the day some spent in making wattles to erect a little oratory, whilst others cleared some ground to make a little garden. But it is supposed that they soon changed the shelter of their Elm for that of seven Yew Trees growing on the declivity of the hill on the south side of the abbey, all standing at this present time, except the largest, which was blown down about the middle of the last century. They are of an extraordinary size; the trunk of one of them is twenty-six feet six inches in circumference, at the height of three feet from the ground, and they stand so near each other as to form a cover almost equal to a thatched roof. Under these trees, we are told by tradition, the monks resided till they built the monastery; which seems to be very probable, if we consider how little a Yew Tree increases in a year, and to what a bulk these are grown. And as the hill side was covered with wood, which is now almost all cut down, except these trees, it seems as if they were left standing to perpetuate the memory of the monks' habitation there during the first winter of their residence."



The Western Oak.

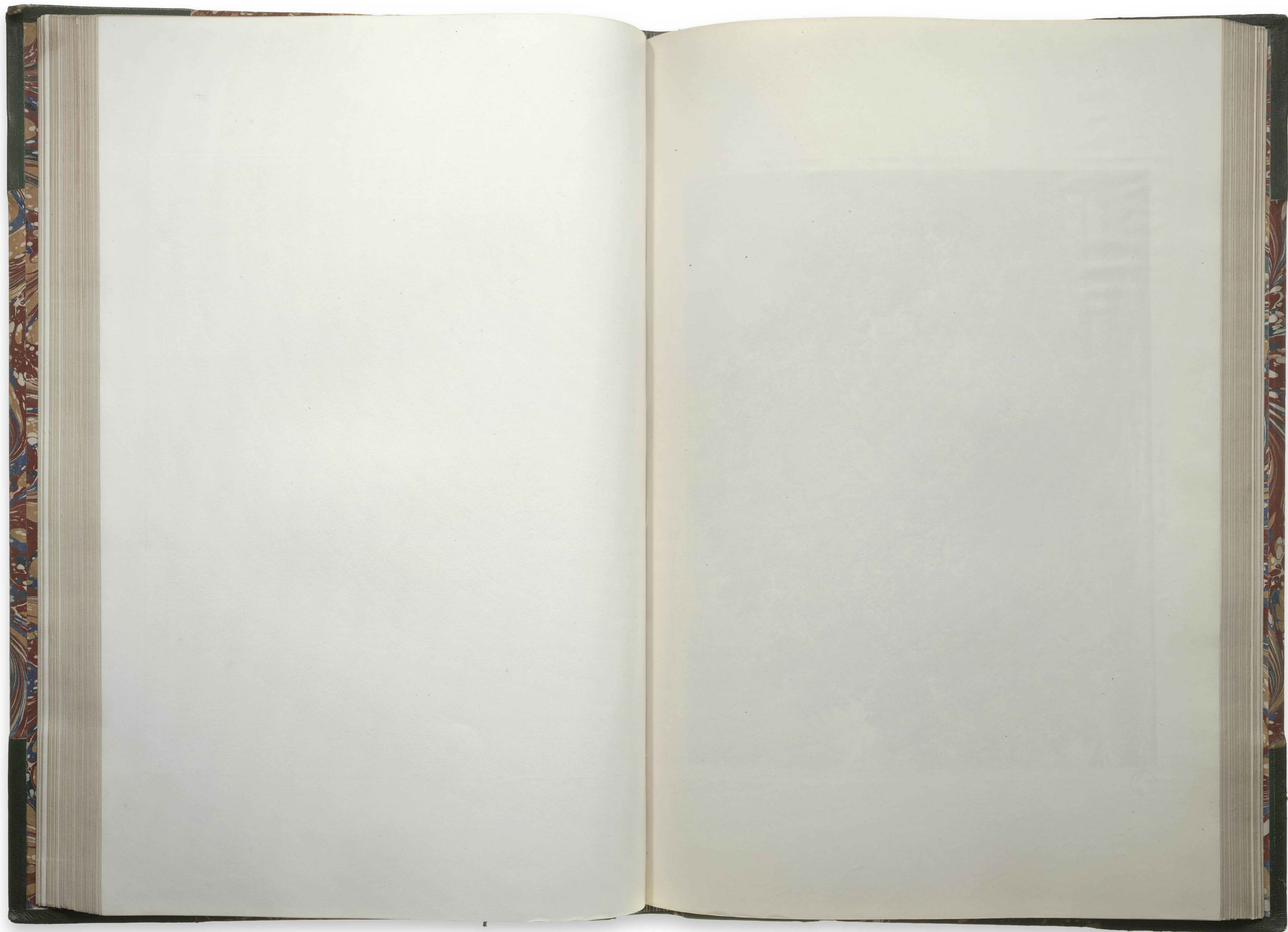
W. Smith del.





The Yew Trees at Downham Abbey.

S. 4. 1.





The Great Ash in Woburn Park

13. A.

There is something extremely captivating to the imagination in the thought that these venerable trees have witnessed the first rearing of the noble edifice, on whose ruins they seem to look in sympathetic decay. They may be imagined as addressing them—

"O, our coevals, remnants of yourselves!"

indeed, every thing connected with them is calculated to awaken the fancy of the poet and the painter, and the reflections of the moralist.

In going from Pately Bridge towards Ripon, about three miles from the latter place, there is a road across the fields, which leads the pedestrian through a sequestered burial-ground belonging to a small chapel, into a retired and beautifully wooded lane; at the bottom of which he is brought into full view, all at once, of Fountains' Abbey, which, by this simple route strikes much more powerfully on the feelings, than when gradually approached by the more formal walks through the pleasure grounds of Studley. From the moment of beholding these magnificent ruins, the spectator must be rapt in delight; now tracing the remains of the Abbey, its nave, its transept, its cloisters, now turning to enjoy the sweetly solemn effect of the general scene. The Ash and Birch enliven by their light foliage the dark masses of shade thrown out by groups of Fir, Larch, and Oak: the cliffs that rise around appear like natural walls, affording a delightful variety of tint, and shaded by ancient trees, whilst the tender saplings spring from between the crevices. Part of the cloisters stretches over the Skell, which murmurs responsive to the scene; the arches cast a deep and dark reflection on the water, whilst about the ruins wave lofty trees, tipped with light foliage, which is also seen peeping in at the narrow pointed windows, as they reflect the light from each other. Opposite to this secluded spot is a small recess in the rocks, by speaking from which a clear echo is returned in a few seconds, as if it floated along the ruined choirs and vaulted passages of the roofless abbey. Inexpressibly interesting are these aerial sounds to the imaginative ear! It should seem as if the spirits of, the cowed brethren still loved to linger in the haunts so dear to them whilst they were in a state of mortal existence—still loved to keep up a link of association with those who, themselves "warm in life," may have been treading just before on the ashes which, at the sound of human footsteps, again glowed with their wonted fires. It did indeed seem the voice of past ages:

"Vox et preterea nihil!"

but how eloquent the response which calls up the scenes and actors of so long a train of centuries gone by! It is such thoughts as these that invest the venerable Yew Trees, the silent witnesses of the changes of time and the decays of nature, with so much interest, and renders their preservation so desirable. They do not, however, appear to be treated with the reverence due to them; a low wall hides their weather-beaten boles on the side whence they would otherwise be seen to the most advantage; and a paltry little stable is erected almost beneath their branches, on which, worst injury of all, the marks of the despoiling axe are but too visible, and the ground underneath is strewn with fragments of larger limbs, probably torn away for petty purposes, to which meaner wood might have been applied with equal utility.

PLATE XXII.—THE GREAT ASH AT WOBURN.

THE Ash, from the lightness of its foliage, the graceful sweep of its branches, and the silvery appearance of its stem, has been called the Venus of the Forest; nor is it less admirable for utility than for beauty, as there is no timber, excepting that of the Oak, that is more generally in use. It is extremely profitable to the planter, as it will grow well in almost any soil, but its shade is accounted unfavourable to vegetation; and as it casts its leaves early, and displays them late, it is less desirable for avenues and pleasure-grounds; though, when it is in fine foliage, there is no tree more beautiful.

The Great Ash at Woburn stands in the Park of His Grace the Duke of Bedford, about a quarter of a mile from the mansion, and is an extraordinary specimen of the size which this tree will attain in favourable situations. It is ninety feet high, from the ground to the top of its branches; and the stem alone is twenty-eight feet. It

is twenty-three feet six inches in circumference on the ground, twenty at one foot, and fifteen feet three inches at three feet from the ground. The circumference of its branches is one hundred and thirteen feet in diameter; and the measurable timber in the body of the tree is three hundred and forty-three feet; and in the arms and branches, one of which is nine feet in circumference, five hundred and twenty-nine; making all together eight hundred and seventy-two feet of timber.

PLATE XXIII.—THE ABBOT'S WILLOW.

In the class of Willow, the Withy, Sallow, and Osier, are included. Of them, as well as of the Willow itself, there are many different species, well known to planters, to whom each has its different uses; but in proportion as they are valuable to the owners of moors or marshy land, wherein they chiefly delight to grow, they are disagreeable to the eye of the painter, as they begin to be polled in the third year of their growth, and their decapitated trunks then present an unsightly spectacle, not much improved when they again sprout forth. This is particularly the case in Huntingdonshire, and parts of the adjoining counties, where the uniformity of the low, flat, and often inundated meadows, is only broken by formal rows of Pollard Willows, standing disconsolately by the sides of ditches, over which they have no branches left to bend.

Very different, however, are the feelings inspired by the sight of a Weeping Willow, hanging in all its natural luxuriance over some translucent stream, which, regardless of the caresses of its dipping foliage, reflects its image for a passing moment, and flows on, the very emblem of carelessness and inconstancy. The Willow, from time immemorial expressive of disappointed love, has furnished to our elder poets a thousand beautiful allusions. Its light and silvery foliage was supposed, in former ages, to shed a mysterious influence around, grateful to the votaries of Diana: this part of its reputation, however, is, it should seem, exploded by the more enlightened science of the present day, as we do not see it particularly resorted to, either for shade or shelter. The Willow was held in the highest estimation by the ancients, for its importance in the service of husbandry; on which account it was dedicated by them to the Goddess Ceres.

We have, however, one sacred and solemn association with this tree, which the heathens could not have; and that is the complaint of the captive Israelites:

"By the rivers of Babylon we sat down; yea, there we wept when we remembered Zion.

"We hunged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

"For they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

The specimen of the Willow exhibited in the plate, is of the species termed by botanists *Salix Alba*, and is probably for size and age unequalled in the kingdom. It stands in the grounds of John Benjafield, Esq., at Bury St. Edmunds, on a part of the ancient demesne of the Abbot of Bury, and which was in the actual possession of the monastery at the time of its dissolution.

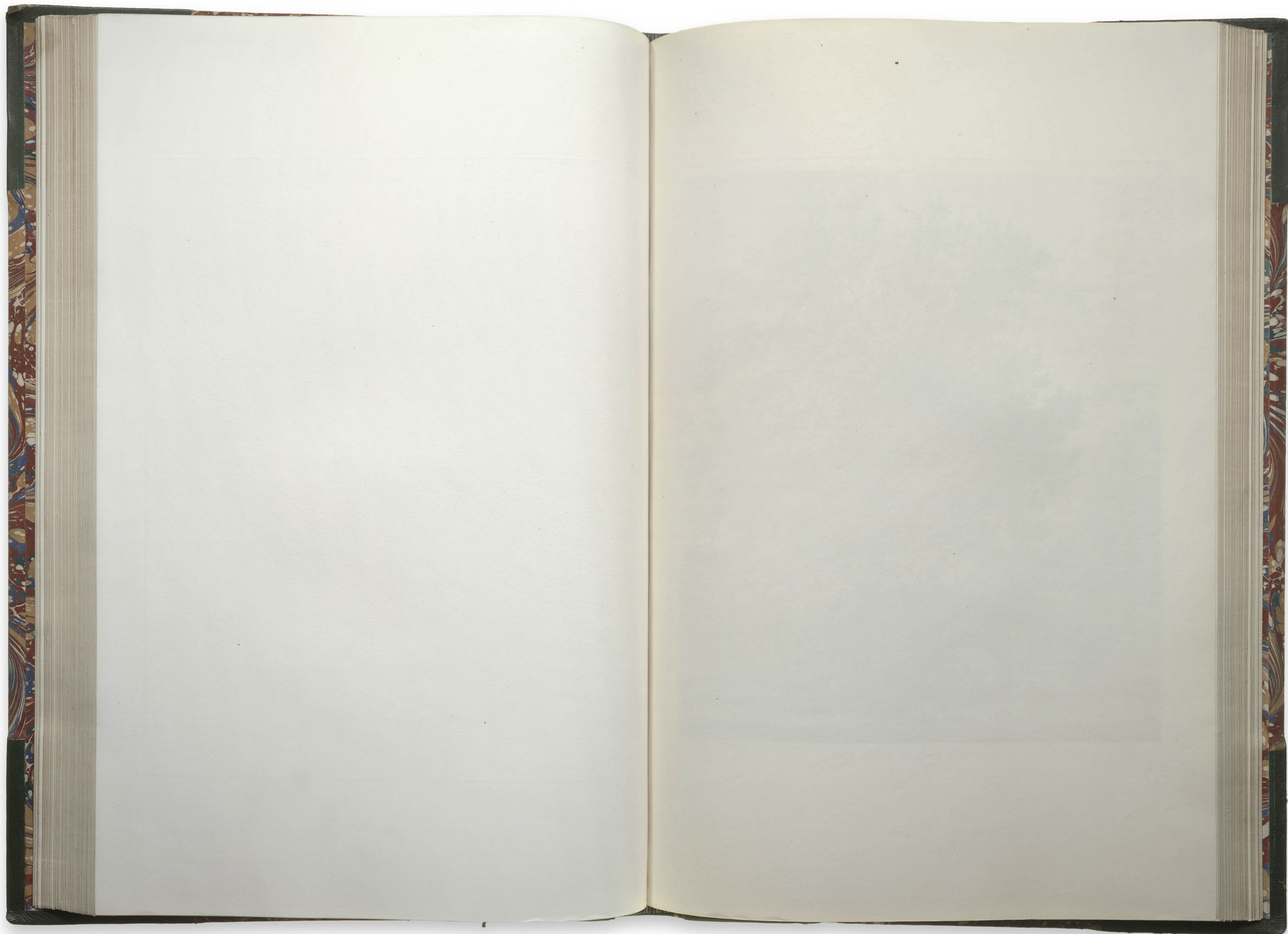
From the uncommon size of the tree, and its being called "The Abbot," conjecture may lead us to suppose that it was planted previously to the dispersion of the members of that far-famed and splendid establishment, which took place in the reign of Henry VIII. Of this, however, there is no certain proof; but its vast dimensions plainly indicate it to have been the growth of centuries. Notwithstanding the great space its spreading branches occupy, it has hitherto suffered but little either from wind or time, nor does it at present exhibit any symptoms of decay. The soil around it is certainly of a nature genial to this class of aquatic trees; for which, as Evelyn observes, a bank at a foot distance from the water, is kinder than a bog, or to be altogether immersed in the water; "for they love not to wet their feet," and last the longer for being kept moderately dry: nevertheless the Abbot's Willow may owe some of its freshness and vigour to a part of its roots communicating with the bed of a small adjoining river, the Lark, on whose bank it stands, in the vicinity of the Botanic Garden, an establishment to which the town and neighbourhood of Bury St. Edmunds are indebted for some of the most elegant and instructive of their recreations through the exertions of Nathaniel Hodson, Esq., its proprietor, whose general taste, and diligent research in botanical science, are already well known to the public.

The measurements of this tree, as taken by Mr. Lenny, an able and accurate Surveyor at Bury, are as follows. Its height is seventy-five feet; the circumference of the stem eighteen feet six inches. The two principal limbs are fifteen and twelve feet in circumference; the ambitus of the boughs is two hundred and four feet; and it contains four hundred and forty feet of solid timber.



Willow at Bury St Edmunds

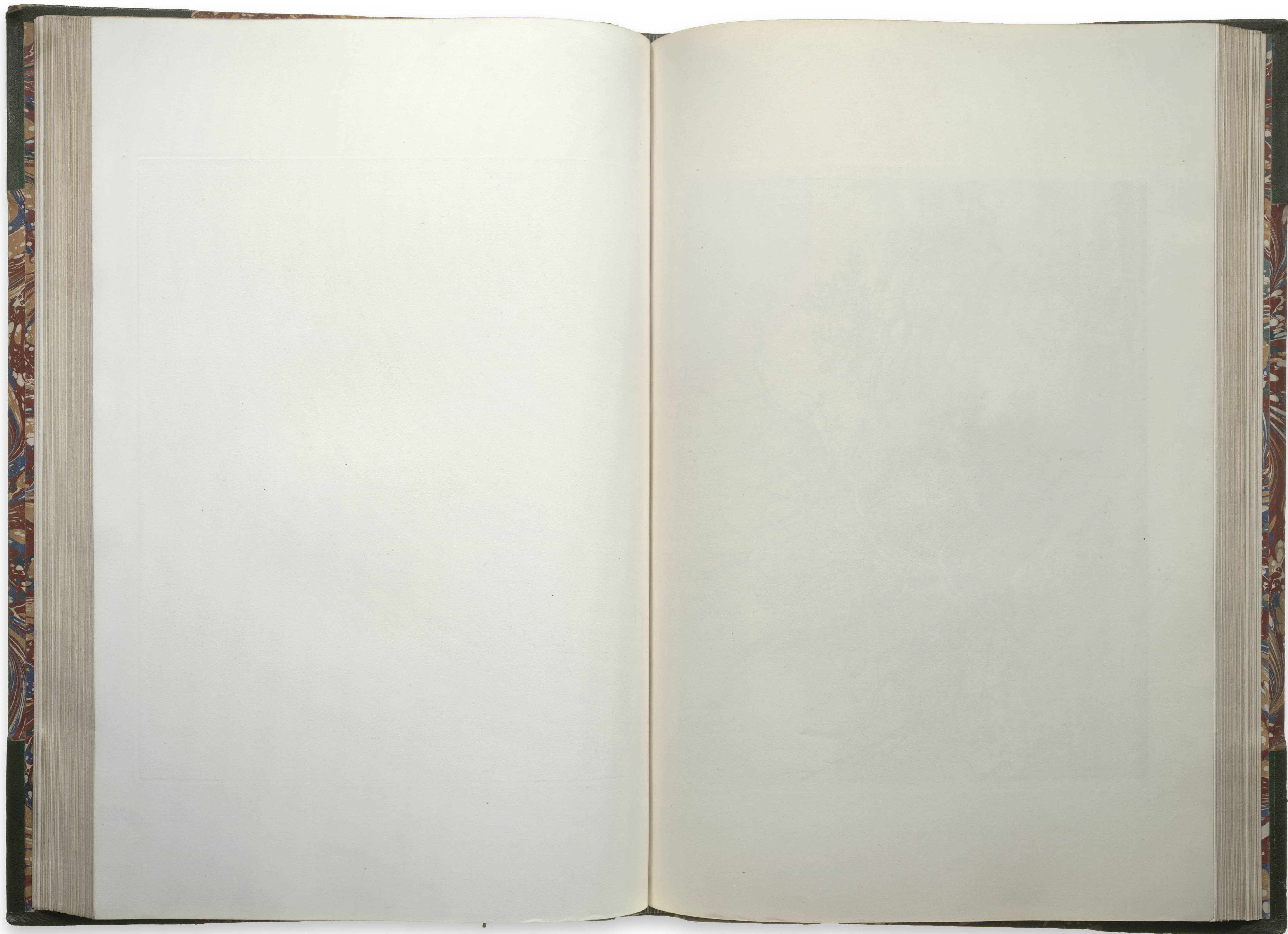
H. S.





Black Poplar at Bury St. Edmunds

1823





The Cornhill Oak.

54

PLATE XXIV.—THE BLACK POPLAR AT BURY ST. EDMUND'S.

THE poplar may be classed among the aquatic trees, though it will grow exceedingly well on ground comparatively dry. There are many species of the Poplar, the chief of which are the white, the black, and the trembling, or aspen. Of these, the Black Poplar is the most scarce in England; it is oftener to be found in Cheshire and Suffolk, than in any other counties; and the accompanying specimen from Bury St. Edmund's may probably challenge competition, both in size and beauty, with any other individual of its kind in the kingdom. It stands near the old monastic bridge, which, with the little river Lark, that runs beneath it, reflecting the graceful branches of the Poplar in its waters, forms an interesting picture, that irresistibly attracts the attention of the traveller, as he enters the town by the road from Norwich.

The Poplar may be regarded in every respect as a classical tree. It was held sacred to Hercules by the ancients; and is celebrated by Homer, Virgil, and Ovid. The latter speaks of the transformation of the sisters of Phaeton into Poplars; and the fiction seems to wear almost the appearance of reality, from the number of those trees that still flourish on the banks of the Po in Italy, in the vicinity of the ancient Eridanus, into which the ambitious charioteer is said to have been precipitated by Jupiter. The Poplar, as well as other trees of the aquatic tribe, copiously exudes the moisture which it imbibes, inasmuch that, in hot calm weather, its foliage, like that of the Willow, is additionally grateful from the drops of water that hang upon its leaves, with the refreshing coolness of a summer shower; and which, to a poetical imagination, like that of Ovid, affords a lively picture of the tears of Phaeton's sisters for his loss, completing the beauty of the story which relates their metamorphosis.

The height of this tree is ninety feet, and its circumference, at a yard from the ground, fifteen; the trunk rises forty-five feet, with but little diminution in size, when it divides into a profusion of luxuriant branches: its solid contents, by accurate measurement, are five hundred and fifty-one feet.

PLATE XXV.—THE COWTHORPE OAK.

THIS gigantic and venerable tree stands at the extremity of the village of Cowthorpe, near Wetherby, in Yorkshire; in a retired field, sheltered on one side by the ancient church belonging to the place, and on another by a farm-house; the rural occupations of which exactly accord with the character of the Oak, whose aged arms are extended towards it, with a peculiar air of rustic vigour, retained even in decay; like some aged peasant, whose toil-worn limbs still give evidence of the strength which enabled him to acquit himself of the labours of his youth. It is mentioned by the late Doctor Hunter, in his edition of Evelyn's Sylva, in the following note on a passage respecting the extraordinary size of an Oak in Sheffield Park. "Neither this, nor any of the Oaks mentioned by Mr. Evelyn, bear any proportion to one now growing at Cowthorpe, near Wetherby, upon an estate belonging to the Right Hon. Lady Stourton. The dimensions are almost incredible. Within three feet of the surface, it measures sixteen yards, and close by the ground twenty-six yards. Its height in its present ruinous state (1776) is almost eighty-five feet, and its principal limb extends sixteen yards from the bole. Throughout the whole tree, the foliage is extremely thin, so that the anatomy of the ancient branches may be distinctly seen in the height of summer. When compared to this, all other trees are but children of the Forest."—Book III. page 500.

This description so nearly answers to the present state of the tree, that it does not appear to have suffered any considerable deprivation since the above period. In girth, indeed, it is inferior to the magnificent remains of the Oak in Saley Forest; but altogether it is a noble and imposing ruin, on which it is impossible to look without entering into the wish suggested to an ingenious writer by the sight of a similar object, and poetically expressed in the following lines:

"When the huge trunk whose bare and forked arms
Pierced the mid sky, now prone, shall bud no more,
Still let the massy ruin, like the bones
Of some majestic hero be preserved
Unviolated and revered—
Whilst the gray father of the vale, at eve,

Returning from his sweltering summer task,
To tend the new-mown grass, or raise the sheaves
Along the western slope of yon gray hill,
Shall stop to tell his listening sons how far
She stretched around her thick-leaved ponderous boughs,
And measure out the space they shadowed."—DAVEY.

PLATE XXVI.—QUEEN ELIZABETH'S OAK.

THIS tree with all its peculiar features, and interesting tradition, is so well described by the Reverend Charles Davy, Rector of Onehouse in Suffolk, whose lines are quoted in the preceding article, that little apology will be necessary for inserting the account of it, in his own words.

"The Queen's Oak at Huntingfield (in Suffolk,) was situated in a park of the Lord Hunsdon, about two bow-shots from the old mansion-house, where Queen Elizabeth is said to have been entertained by this nobleman, and to have enjoyed the pleasures of the chase in a kind of rural majesty. The approach to it was by a bridge, over an arm of the river Blythe, and, if I remember right, through three square courts. A gallery was continued the whole length of the building, which opening upon a balcony over the porch, gave an air of grandeur with some variety to the front. The great hall was built round six straight massy oaks, which originally supported the roof as they grew: upon these the foresters and yeomen of the guard used to hang their nets, cross-bows, hunting-poles, great saddles, calivers, bills, &c. The roots of them had been long decayed, when I visited this romantic dwelling; and the shafts sawn off at bottom were supported either by irregular logs of wood driven under them, or by masonry. Part of the long gallery, where the queen and her fair attendants used to divert themselves, was converted into an immense cheese-chamber; and upon my first looking into it, in the dusk of a summer's evening, when a number of these huge circular things were scattered upon the floor, it struck me that the maids of honour had just slipped off their fardingales to prepare for a general romping.

"Elizabeth is reported to have been much pleased with the retirement of this park, which was filled with tall and massy timbers, and to have been particularly amused and entertained with the solemnity of its walks and bowers; but this Oak, from which, the tradition is that she shot a buck with her own hand, was her favorite tree; it is still in some degree of vigour, though most of its boughs are broken off, and those which remain are approaching to a total decay, as well as its vast trunk; the principal arm, *now bald with dry antiquity*, shoots up to a great height above the leafage, and being hollow and truncated at top, with several cracks resembling loop-holes, through which the light shines into its cavity, it gives us an idea of the winding staircase in a lofty Gothic turret, which, detached from the ruins of some venerable pile, hangs tottering to its fall, and affects the mind of a beholder after the same manner by its greatness and sublimity."—*Davy's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 239.

This account was written about the year 1773. The principal arm, which is so accurately described in it, has suffered much since that time. The upper part of it is considerably shortened, probably having been brought to the ground by some of the many winter gales which have been weathered by the parent stem. The tree is nevertheless, from the associations connected with it, one of the most interesting objects in the park of Lord Huntingfield, whose property it is.

It measures thirty-four feet in girth, at five feet from the ground; Mr. Davy imagines it to have been five or six hundred years old, at the time he saw it, and its present appearance is sufficiently venerable to bear out the conjecture.

PLATE XXVII.—SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S OAK.

THE beautiful estate of Penshurst, on which this tree stands, may be deemed classic ground in every part, as the ancient property of the Sidneys, one of the most illustrious families of which England can boast. The tree itself has a more particular claim on our veneration, having been planted at the birth of Sir Philip Sidney; a name dear alike to valour and the muses, consecrated by every virtue that could adorn private life, and graced with talents that rendered their possessor the admiration of Europe, even in his bloom of youth. Every memorial of a birth so auspicious, every remembrance of a career bright, though, alas! brief

"as the lightning in the coiled night,"

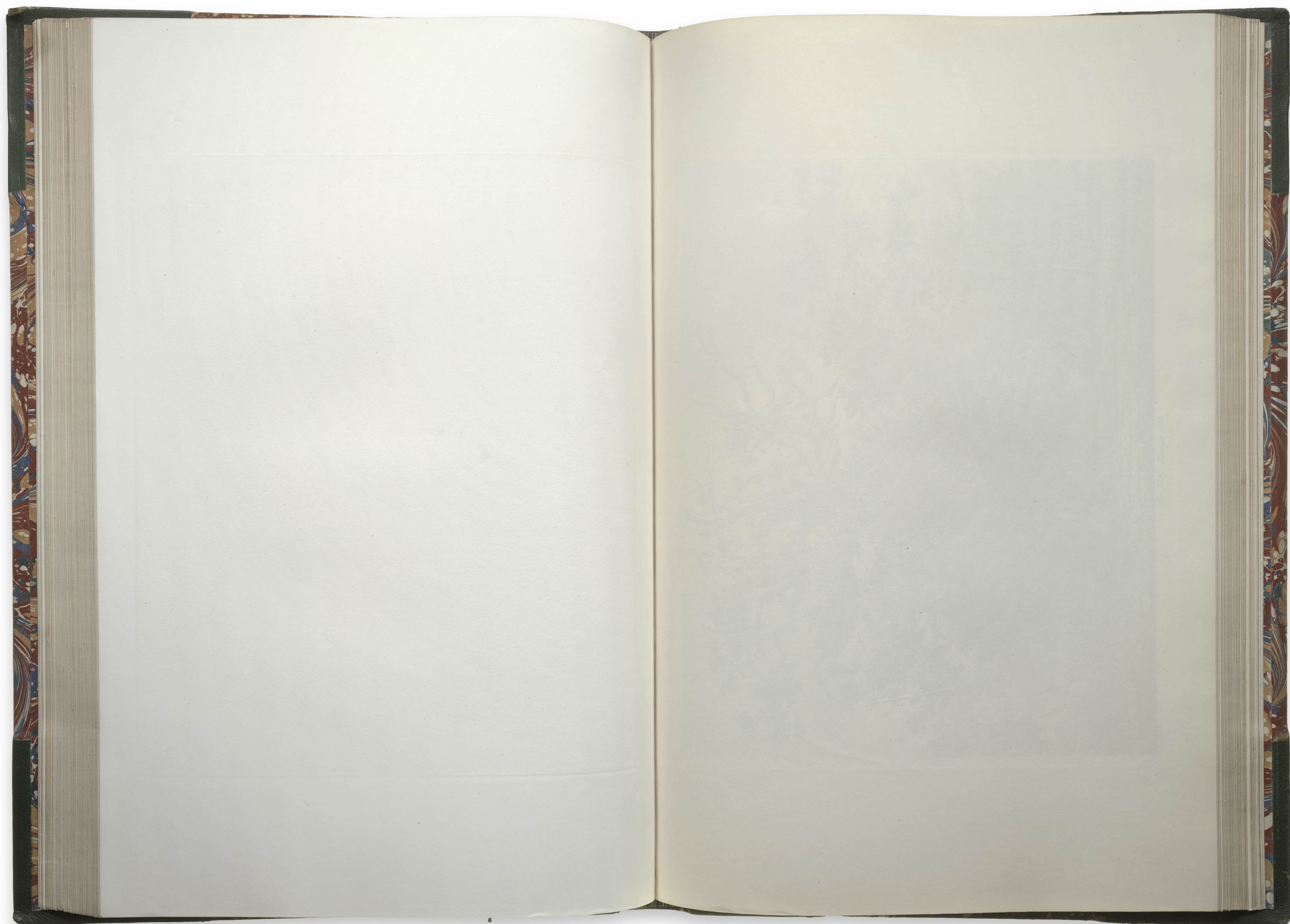
is of value to the poet. Hence this oak has been celebrated by many of our best writers. Ben Jonson speaks of it as,

"That taller tree, which of a nut was set
At his great birth where all the muses met."



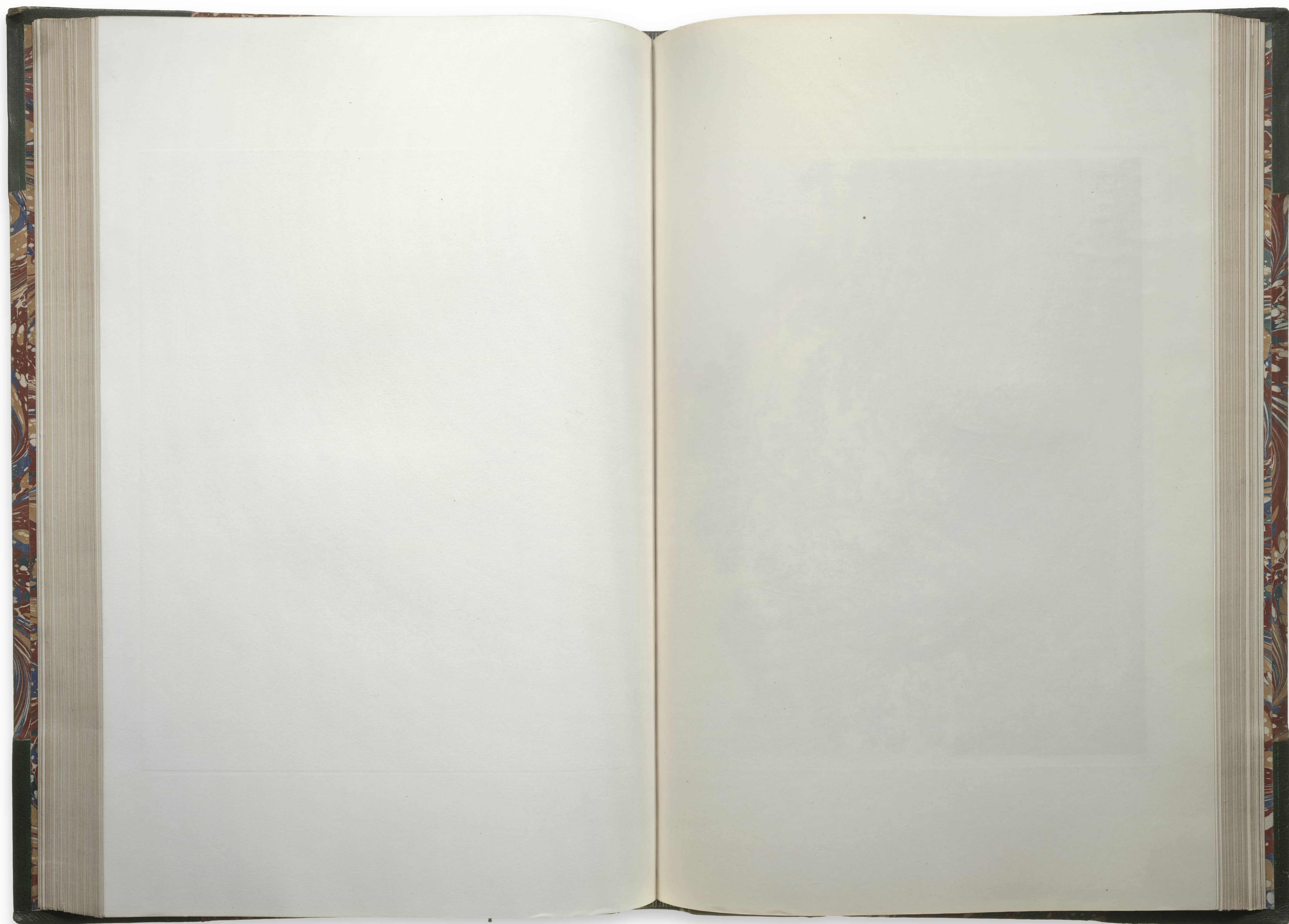
Queen Elizabeth's Oak.

PLATE 10





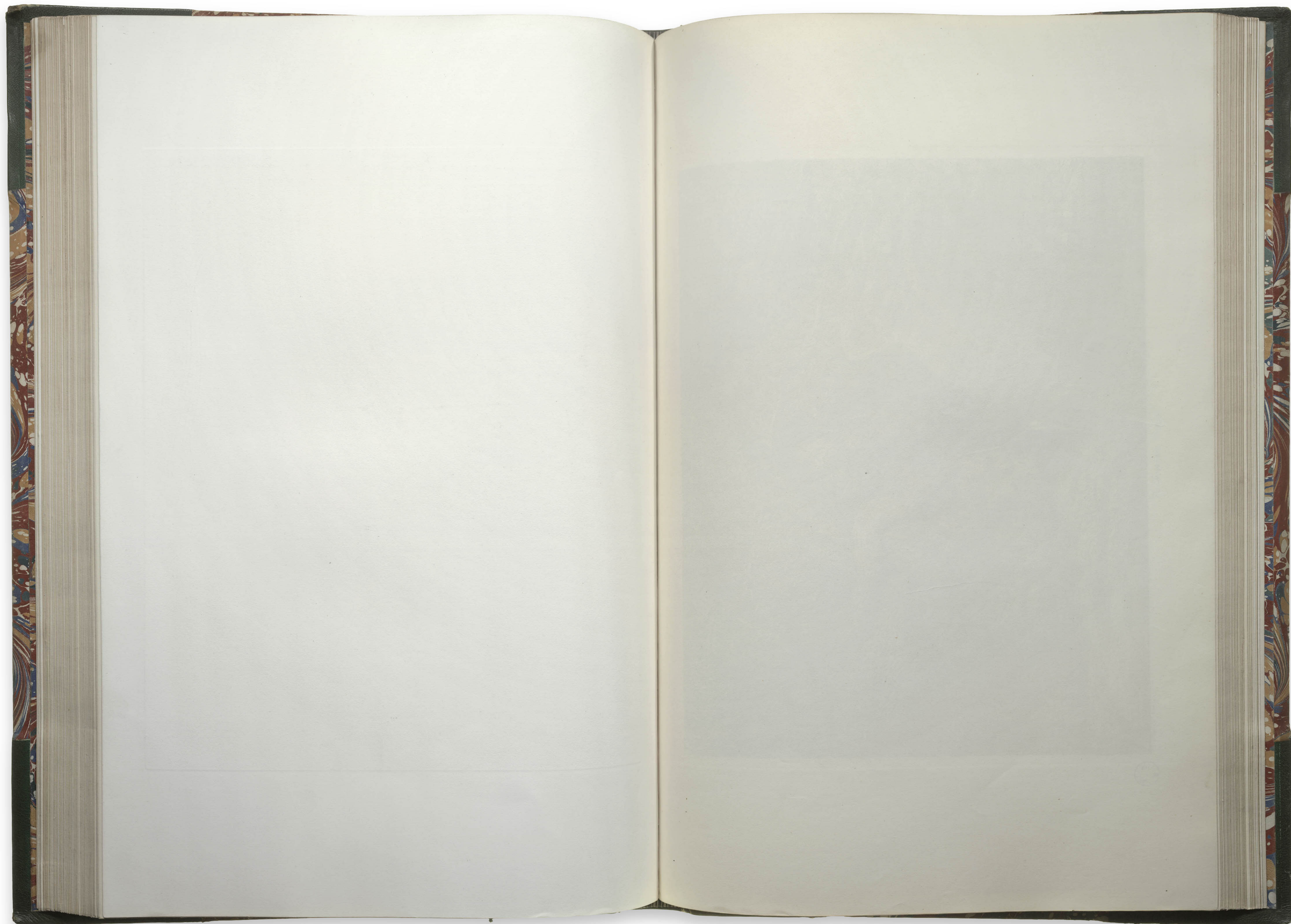
Ex. 12





The King Oak in Sawmucke Forest

H. A. S.





The Foxglove, Chestnut

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And Waller, the gallant and elegant Waller, who never lost sight of an allusion which might add, in the eyes of his mistress, to the vivacity of his attachment, thus immortalizes his numbers, by connecting them with a name which, whilst England exists as a nation, will always be proudly mentioned in her annals.

"Go, boy, and carve this passion on the bark
Of yonder tree, which stands the sacred mark
Of Noble Sidney's birth; when such benign,
Such more than mortal-making stars did shine,

That there they cannot but for ever prove
The monument and pledge of humble love:
His humble love whose hope shall ne'er rise higher,
Than for a pardon that he dares admire."

Sweet sounds often awaken echoes not less sweet; so have these lines of Waller, rushing over a poetic mind, filled it with images of the Sidneys, the Dudleys, the Leicesters of former ages, and brought forth the following interesting picture of the feelings which Penshurst, so long the noble residence of busy and exalted spirits, is calculated to awaken in its present state of comparative desolation and abandonment.

Ye Towers sublime, deserted now and drear,
Ye woods, deep sighing to the hollow blast,
The missing wanderer loves to linger near,
While History points to all your glories past:
And starting from their haunts the timid deer,
To trace the walks obscured by matted fern,
Which Waller's soothing lyre were wont to hear,
But where now clamours the discordant heron!

The spoiling hand of Time may overturn
These lofty battlements, and quite deface
The fading canvas whence we love to learn
Sidney's keen look, and Sacharissa's grace;
But fame and beauty still defy decay,
Saved by the historic page—the poet's tender lay!

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

Sir Philip Sidney's Oak, so intimately associated with these recollections, is above twenty-two feet in girth. Time has begun his depredations upon it, by hollowing the stem, but its branches extend in every direction with an amplitude and vigour that denote it likely to remain for centuries, an object equally pleasing to the eye and interesting to the imagination; and the evident care with which all its lower limbs have been preserved from the axe, which has despoiled so many of its brethren, is one strong proof how much the name connected with it has added to its value in the eyes of its illustrious owners.

PLATE XXVIII.—THE KING OAK.

This Oak stands in Savernake Forest, one of the most interesting spots in the kingdom to the lovers of wild woody scenery. Whilst exploring its tangled haunts, and gazing on the massive trunks that every where throw their aged arms across his path, the imagination of the spectator wafts him back to the days of William the Conqueror, and all the vaunted privileges of the chase. It belongs to the Marquis of Aylesbury, and is almost the only forest in England in the hands of a subject; by whom, in strict language, only a chase is tenable. The King Oak, its most venerable ornament, spreads its branches over a diameter of sixty yards, and is twenty-four feet in girth. The trunk is quite hollow, and altogether its appearance of age warrants the idea that it may have witnessed in its infancy, those rites and sacrifices of our Saxon ancestors, which were held in such shadowy recesses, at once to increase their solemnity, and to shield them from the profane eyes of vulgar observers.

PLATE XXIX.—THE TORTWORTH CHESNUT.

This venerable tree is probably the largest, as well as the oldest, now standing in England. It is brought forward in evidence by Dr. Ducarel, in his contest with Daines Barrington, respecting the Chesnut being a native of Britain, as a proof that it is indigenous. In the reign of Stephen, who ascended the throne in 1135, it was deemed so remarkable for its size, that, as appears upon record, it was well known as a signal boundary to

the manor of Tortworth, in Gloucestershire, where it stands, and is mentioned as such by Evelyn, in his *SYLVA*, b. III. c. 3. At the time that it was thus conspicuous for its magnitude and vigour, we may reasonably suppose it to have been in its prime; if, therefore, we pay any regard to the received opinion which is applied to the Chesnut, equally with the Oak, that it is three hundred years in coming to perfection, this calculation takes us back to the beginning of the reign of Egbert, in the year 800, for the commencement of the existence of the Tortworth Chesnut. Since that epoch above a thousand years have rolled over its yet green head. How is it possible, bearing this reflection in our minds, to look upon its gigantic trunk, and widely-spreading arms, without feelings of reverence! How many, not merely generations of men, but whole nations, have been swept from the face of the earth, whilst, winter after winter, it has defied the howling blasts with its bare branches, and spring after spring put forth its leaves again, a grateful shelter from the summer suns! Its tranquil existence, unlike that of the human race, stained by no guilt, chequered by no vicissitudes, is thus perpetually renewing itself; and, if we judge from the luxuriance of its foliage, and the vigour of the branches which encircle the parent stem in wild profusion, may be prolonged for as many more centuries as it has already stood. Nor is it solitary in its old age. Its progeny rises around it, and its venerable roots are nearly hidden by the lighter saplings and bushes that have sought the protection of its boughs, making it appear a grove in itself—a fit residence for some sylvan deity, and realising Cowley's animated apostrophe:

"Hail, old patrician trees, so great and good!
Hail, ye plebeian underwood,
Where the poetic birds rejoice,
And for their quiet nests and plenteous food
Pay with their grateful voice.

"Here Nature does a house for me erect,—
Nature, the wisest architect,
Who those fond artists does despise

That can the fair and living trees neglect,
Yet the dead timber prize.

"Here let me, careless and unthoughtful lying,
Hear the soft winds above me flying,
With all their wanton boughs dispute,
And the more tuneful birds to both replying,
Nor be myself too mute."

It is only on approaching within the very limits overshadowed by its spreading branches, that the size of this majestic tree can be duly estimated: but when its full proportions are fairly viewed on all sides, it strikes the beholder with feelings of wonder and admiration, sufficient to produce conviction that the accounts which travellers have given of the monstrous bulk of the famous Chesnut on Mount Etna have not exceeded the truth.

When we consider how beautiful and interesting an object a magnificent tree is in itself, how proud an ornament it forms to the spot whereon it flourishes—an ornament not to be equalled by any edifice reared by human hands; how incontestable a witness it stands to the ancient riches or honours of those on whose estates it may for ages have been cherished and preserved; it might be imagined, that such as are fortunate enough to possess any remarkable treasures of this description in their parks or forests, would at least be as studious to retain them, as to amass other curiosities of nature or of art, which may be of comparatively short duration: yet the Tortworth Chesnut does not appear to have been treated with the respect due to its age and magnitude, or the care desirable for its continuance. It is only within a few years that it has been relieved from the pressure of three walls, in the angle of which it stood, and which must have greatly injured the spreading of its roots. The axe which would have been commendably employed in clearing the approach to it of brambles and briers, has, on the contrary, been barbarously, though not recently, applied to the tree itself; which has been wantonly despoiled of several large limbs on the north-east side, apparently many years ago: it is in consequence much decayed on that side, whilst on the others it is still sound. The Tortworth Chesnut, in 1766, measured fifty feet in circumference, at five feet from the ground. The body is ten feet in height, to the fork, where it divides into three limbs, one of which, at the period already mentioned, measured twenty-eight feet and a half in girth, at the distance of five feet from the parent stem. The solid contents, according to the customary method of measuring timber, are one thousand nine hundred and sixty-five feet; but its true geometrical contents must be much more.

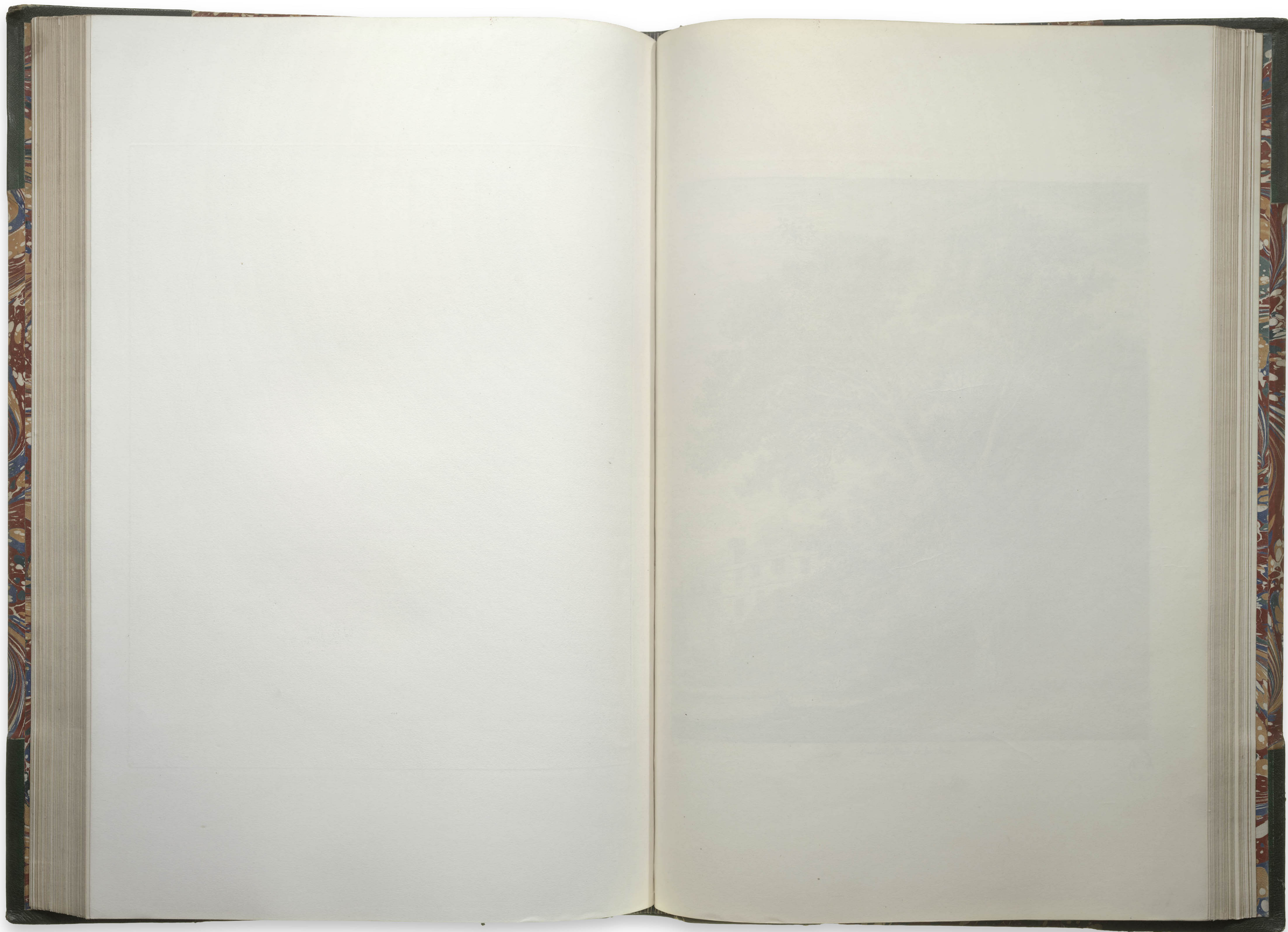
PLATE XXX.—THE SYCAMORE AND LIME IN COBHAM PARK.

THE Sycamore is a species of the Maple: in favourable situations it attains to a considerable stature, and will remain a long time in a state of perfection. Evelyn accuses it of contaminating the walks, wherein it may be planted, with its leaves, which, like those of the Ash, fall early, and putrefy with the first moisture of



View and Spire in Charnock Park

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Oriental Place at Lee Place.

18

the season. This great Oracle of the Forests therefore remarks, that with his consent it should be banished from all curious gardens and avenues, though he acknowledges that for more distant plantations it is desirable; particularly where better timber will not prosper so well, as in places near the sea; it being no way injured by the spray, which is so prejudicial to most trees. The frequent allusions to the Sycamore in Holy Writ, show how much it was cultivated in divers parts of Asia. Zaccheus climbed up into a Sycamore tree to see our Saviour ride in triumph to Jerusalem; and we are told by St. Hierom, who lived in the fourth century after Christ, that he had himself seen this same tree; a sufficient evidence of the length of time which it will stand without decay. It is said of Solomon, among his other meritorious deeds, that "cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance," 1 Kings x. 27. In his father David's time, an officer is mentioned as being appointed to superintend "the olive trees, and the sycamore trees that were in the low plains," 1 Chron. xxvii. 28. And the royal Psalmist, in recounting the remarks of the Almighty's displeasure against the Israelites, includes his destroying "their Sycamore trees with frost." It is probably from associations of this kind that it has been planted more frequently near religious edifices than in other situations: indeed, it was little known in England even so late as the 17th century. Chaucer speaks of it as a rare exotic in the 14th century: Gerard, who wrote in 1597, says, "The great maple is a stranger in England, only it groweth in the walks and places of pleasure of noblemen, where it especially is planted for the shadowe sake, and under the name of Sycamore tree." And Parkinson, speaking of the same, in 1640, says, "It is no where found wilde, or naturall in our land, that I can learne, but only planted in orchards or walks, for the shadowe's sake." At present, however, it is to be found in all parts of the kingdom, and is capable of being made equally profitable and ornamental. The present specimen stands on a gently rising ground, in Cobham Park, and with its graceful and fragrant neighbour—

"The Lime, at dewy eve,
Diffusing odours,"

forms a pleasing object from the windows of the ancient and noble edifice opposite to which it rears its stately head. It measures twenty-six feet in circumference at the ground, and is ninety-four feet in height. Its solid contents are four hundred and fifty feet.

The Lime is perhaps a descendant from one which Parkinson notices at Cobham, the luxuriant branches of which formed three arbours, one over another, which he observes was "a goodly spectacle." It is at present not likely to emulate its predecessor in this respect, rather aspiring to height of stature, than throwing its arms out in the luxuriance which characterizes many of its species; but it is an elegant and flourishing tree, likely to increase in size for many years: at this period of time it measures at the ground above twenty-eight feet in circumference; it is ninety-one feet in height, and contains five hundred and thirty-six feet of timber.

PLATE XXXI.—THE PLANE TREE AT LEE COURT.

THE Plane Tree is of comparatively modern introduction into this country, which is said to be indebted for it to the great Lord Chancellor Bacon, who first planted it at Verulam. He probably procured the seedlings of the species from Sicily, into which island it was transplanted from the Levant, and afterwards spread throughout Italy, of which it has ever since formed the coolest and most refreshing shades. It was held in the highest estimation by the ancient Greeks and Romans. We are told of Xerxes, that finding one of extraordinary beauty and dimensions, he halted his army to pitch his tent under its shade, bedecking it with a golden chain in token of his admiration when he was compelled to proceed; and afterwards causing a golden medal to be struck, engraved with the image of the tree, and which he wore ever after, in remembrance of the pleasure he had felt in reposing beneath its balmy and luxuriant foliage. Among the numerous acts of eccentricity attributed to Xerxes, this is perhaps the only one which can be dwelt upon with any view of placing his character in an advantageous light; as it at least shows him to have possessed a mind originally alive to the beauties of nature, and retaining, in the midst of all his luxuries and excesses, sensibility enough to be affected by them.

Homer mentions a sacrifice under a beautiful Plane Tree, καλὴ δένδρεα. The Philosophical conversations of Socrates are represented as passing under its shade, and the academic groves, at the very mention of which Plato and his disciples rise to the enamoured fancy, were formed of its branches. The Romans thought their most magnificent villas imperfect unless they were sheltered by the lofty and wide-spreading Plane; and the Turks, who treat it with extraordinary reverence, plant it near their dwellings, under the idea that it sheds a

salutary influence over the noxious vapours by which the plague is generated. No part of Europe can show such gigantic Planes as those in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. They may be esteemed next to the Cedars of Lebanon in dignity and durability. The precise age that the Plane tree will attain, has never been exactly ascertained; but if we accept the testimony of Pausanias, who lived in the middle of the second century, we shall scarcely assign it a shorter period of duration than the Oak; for he tells us of one in Arcadia of extraordinary size and beauty, supposed to have been planted by Menelaus, the husband of the beautiful Helen, about thirteen hundred years before the period when he describes it as being in so much luxuriance and vigour. There are two species of this tree, the Oriental, and the Occidental: they both love the water, particularly the Occidental, which thrives rapidly by the side of a stream; and the size which they attain in those soils where they flourish best, introduces them to a still closer acquaintance with the element they are so fond of, by rendering their trunks fit for vessels and canoes, to which purpose they are frequently applied.

The Plane Tree at Lee Court, near Blackheath, is a beautiful specimen of the Oriental kind. It waves its slender branches and light clustering leaves over the stream of a small rivulet, tempting the angler to seek its cooling shade; whilst within a few yards' distance, on the opposite bank, stands the ancient residence of the family of Bohun, thus described in the journal of Evelyn. "Went to visit our good neighbour Mr. Bohun, whose whole house is a cabinet of all elegancies, especially Indian; in the hall are contrivances of Japan screens instead of wainscot, and there is an excellent pendule clock, enclosed in the curious flower-work of Mr. Gibbons, in the middle of the vestibule. The landscapes of the screens represent the manner of living, and country of the Chinese. But above all, his lady's cabinet is adorned on the fret, ceiling, and chimney-piece, with Mr. Gibbons' best carving. There are also some of Streeter's best paintings, and many curiosities of gold and silver, as growing in the mines. The gardens are exactly kept, and the whole place very agreeable and well watered." The tree itself is mentioned in a subsequent passage. "Sept. 16. 1683. At the elegant villa and garden of Mr. Bohun's at Lee. He shewed me the Zinnar tree, or Platannus, and told me that since they had planted this kind of tree about the city of Ispahan in Persia, the plague, which formerly much infested the place, had exceedingly abated of its mortal effects, and rendered it very healthy." Evelyn's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 525. Lee Court remains at present much in the state in which it was during Evelyn's time; and the idea of this Plane tree having been examined by him with curiosity and interest, as one of the earliest introduced into this country, is sufficient to give it value in the eyes of all who are acquainted with his admirable genius and virtues, independent of the attraction which it may boast in its own beauty.—The circumference of this tree at six feet from the ground is fourteen feet eight inches; it rises to the height of about sixty-five feet, and contains three hundred and one feet of timber.

PLATE XXXII.—THE CRAWLEY ELM.

THIS aged tree stands in the village of Crawley, on the high road from London to Brighton. It is a well-known object to all who are in the habit of travelling that way, and arrests the eye of the stranger at once by its tall and straight stem, which ascends to the height of seventy feet, and by the fantastic ruggedness of its wildly-spreading roots. Its trunk is perforated to the very top, measuring sixty-one feet in circumference at the ground, and thirty-five feet round the inside, at two feet from the base.

In former ages it would have constituted a fit retreat for a Druid, whence he might have dispensed his sacred oracles; or in latter times for a hermit, who might have sat within the hollow stem with

"His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,"

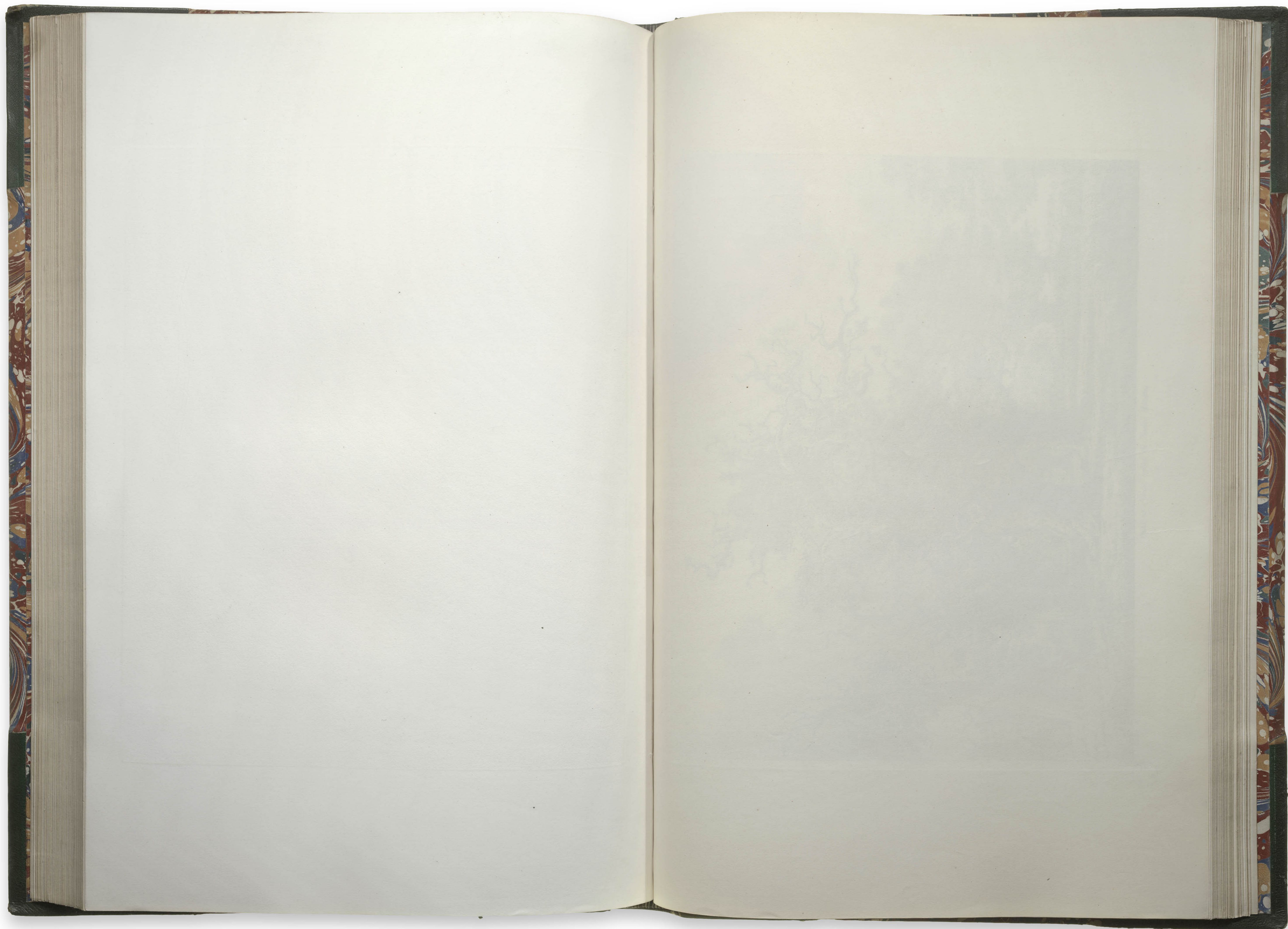
and gazed on the stars as they passed over his head, without his reflections being disturbed by the intervention of a single outward object: but to the benevolent mind it gives rise to more pleasing ideas in its present state; lifting its tranquil head over humble roofs, which it has sheltered from their foundation, and affording, in the projections and points around its base, an inexhaustible source of pleasure to the train of village children who cluster like bees around it, trying their infant strength and courage in climbing its mimic precipices; whilst their parents recall, in their pastimes, the feelings of their own childhood, when, like them, they disported under the same boughs. It is such associations as these that render a well-known and favourite tree an object that no art can imitate, no substitute replace. It seems to live with us, and for us; and he who can wantonly destroy the source of so much innocent, and indeed exalted gratification, appears to commit an injury against a friend



J. G. Smith 1824

Elm at Grawley in Suffolk

1824





Oaks at Borkley, called the Justice Oakes.

Pl. 8

which we find more difficulty in forgiving than one against ourselves. It would be impossible to see such a noble tree as the Crawley Elm felled without regret;—its aged head brought prostrate to the ground, its still green branches despoiled in the dust, its spreading roots left bare and desolate. The old would miss it, as the object that brought back to them the recollections of their youth; the young would lament for it, as having hoped to talk of it when they should be old themselves. The traveller who had heard of its beauty would look for it in vain, to beguile him on the road; and the weary wanderer, returning to his long-left home, would scarcely know his paternal roof when robbed of the shade of the branches which he had seen wave even before his cradle. A stately forest is one of the grandest sights in creation; an insulated tree, one of the most beautiful. In the deep recesses of a wood an aged tree commands a veneration, similar to that which we are early taught to feel towards the possessor of royalty, or the minister of religion; but in a hamlet, or on a green, we regard it with the gentler reverence due to a parent, or the affection inspired by the presence of a long-tried friend.

PLATE XXXIII.—THE OAKS AT BURLEY,

CALLED

THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

This fine group of Oaks, twelve in number, stands on the lawn at Burley Lodge, New Forest, the property of Lord Bolton. The largest of them is seven yards and a half in circumference. They are known by the name of the Twelve Apostles, and perhaps this designation unconsciously adds to the feelings of reverence and regard which their venerable appearance, and their proximity to each other, as if drawn together by bonds of friendship, are calculated to inspire. There is a solemnity in a group of ancient trees that irresistibly disposes the mind to serious thought, and carries it back to former ages:

"It seems idolatry with some excuse
When our forefather Druids in their oaks
Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet,
Unpurged by an authentic act

Of amnesty, the meal of blood divine,
Loved not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
Of fruit proscribed, as to a refuge fled."—COWPER.

Chardin, who published his Travels in Turkey in the 17th century, remarks, that the religious Mahometans chose to pray under old trees, rather than in the neighbouring mosques: "They devoutly reverence," says he, "those trees which seem to have existed during many ages; piously believing that the holy men of former times had prayed and meditated under their umbrageous shade." With such feelings, no wonder that they place their highest gratification in reclining under the widely-spreading branches of some fine tree, and regard the destruction of one as an act of sacrilege.

The beautiful forest scenery with which the Oaks at Burley are surrounded on every side, predispose the lover of sylvan objects to be pleased with them, at the same time that they awaken in his breast an ardent desire to see every tree that bows its head to the earth, either by natural decay, by the fury of the elements, or the more furious and un pitying axe, replaced by a whole group of successors. "The value of timber," says Gilpin, "is its misfortune: every graceless hand can fell a tree." But the hand that fells an oak can likewise plant an acorn; and this restitution to mother earth is surely due from those who despoil her of her noblest and most ancient treasures, to satisfy some low necessity of the passing moment. Sir Robert Walpole planted with his own hands many of the magnificent trees which are now the pride of Houghton; and of all the actions of his busy life, this is one which seems to have given him most gratification in the performance, and most pleasure in the retrospect. "Men," says Evelyn, "seldom plant trees till they begin to be wise; that is, till they grow old, and find by experience the prudence and necessity of it." Cicero mentions planting as one of the most delightful occupations of old age, and it is indeed of all pursuits connected with the interests of mankind, one of the most nobly disinterested, yet the most truly wise. He who puts a sapling into the ground, is morally certain that he shall not live to enjoy the shade of its matured branches; but he enjoys it every day, and a thousand fold, in the thought, that the land, which to his predecessors had been only a barren waste, will present to his successors a scene of waving beauty, sheltering the surrounding country, and inviting many a devious step to

explore its tangled haunts. This fine feeling of entering by proxy, as it were, into the interests and enjoyments of posterity, is most pleasingly expressed in the following lines on an obelisk at the termination of a noble avenue in the park of Lord Carlisle, at Castle Howard in Yorkshire, and written by one of his ancestors:

"If to perfection these plantations rise,
If they agreeably my heirs surprise,
This faithful pillar will their age declare,
As long as Time these characters shall spare.

Here then with kind remembrance read his name
Who for posterity perform'd the same.
Charles, the 3d Earl of Carlisle
of the family of the Howards.
Erected 1731."

It is impossible to read these lines, quaint and simple as they are, without being conscious of sentiments of respect towards the benevolent spirit by which they are dictated; and under that impression the very trees themselves seem to rise in prouder majesty, to fan the air more gracefully, to offer a more refreshing shade, in grateful tribute to the memory of him by whose hand they were planted.

PLATE XXXIV.—THE SQUITCH BANK OAK.

THIS majestic Tree stands in Bagot's Park, in Staffordshire. It is the property of Lord Bagot, who may be regarded as one of the greatest encouragers of Oak timber in the kingdom, having planted two millions of acorns on his estates in Staffordshire and Wales; which display, on every side, scenes of sylvan beauty and grandeur that can scarcely be surpassed. Bagot's Park, as already mentioned, is four miles from Blithfield, a domain abounding with rich and graceful variety of scenery. The gardens bloom with a thousand sweets; the birds warbling among them in notes of gratitude to the fresh and balmy air. The lawns, clothed with oaks and clumps of trees, exhibit the most soft and delicious verdure, and present at every turn splendid views over a rich and woody country. The Park itself abounds with magnificent and ancient timber: it is plentifully stocked with red deer, and wild goats, and is bordered with the romantic cliffs that rise on the banks of the river Dove. It was amid scenes so inspiring and delightful, and under the encouraging influence of attentions from their noble owner, of which he will always retain a great remembrance, that the Author of this work made one of his earliest sketches for it, from the Beggar's Oak: and he trusts he shall not be accused of an undue degree of egotism, if he so far yields to the impulse of his feelings, as to acknowledge in this place the gratification he has derived from finding his attempt to form a national record of some of the principal Forest Trees that peculiarly ornament England above all other countries, so generously received by the public, as well as by the distinguished individuals from whose domains his subjects have been principally derived.

The Squitch Bank Oak is in its full vigour and beauty. Its circumference at the roots is forty-three feet; and at five feet high it is twenty-one feet nine inches. It is thirty-three feet in height to the crown; and twenty-eight feet above; in all sixty-one feet. The butt contains six hundred and sixty feet nine inches of timber; the principal limb seventy-nine feet six inches; and the other limbs, fourteen in number, two hundred and seventy-two feet seven inches; making its total contents one thousand and twelve feet ten inches of solid timber.

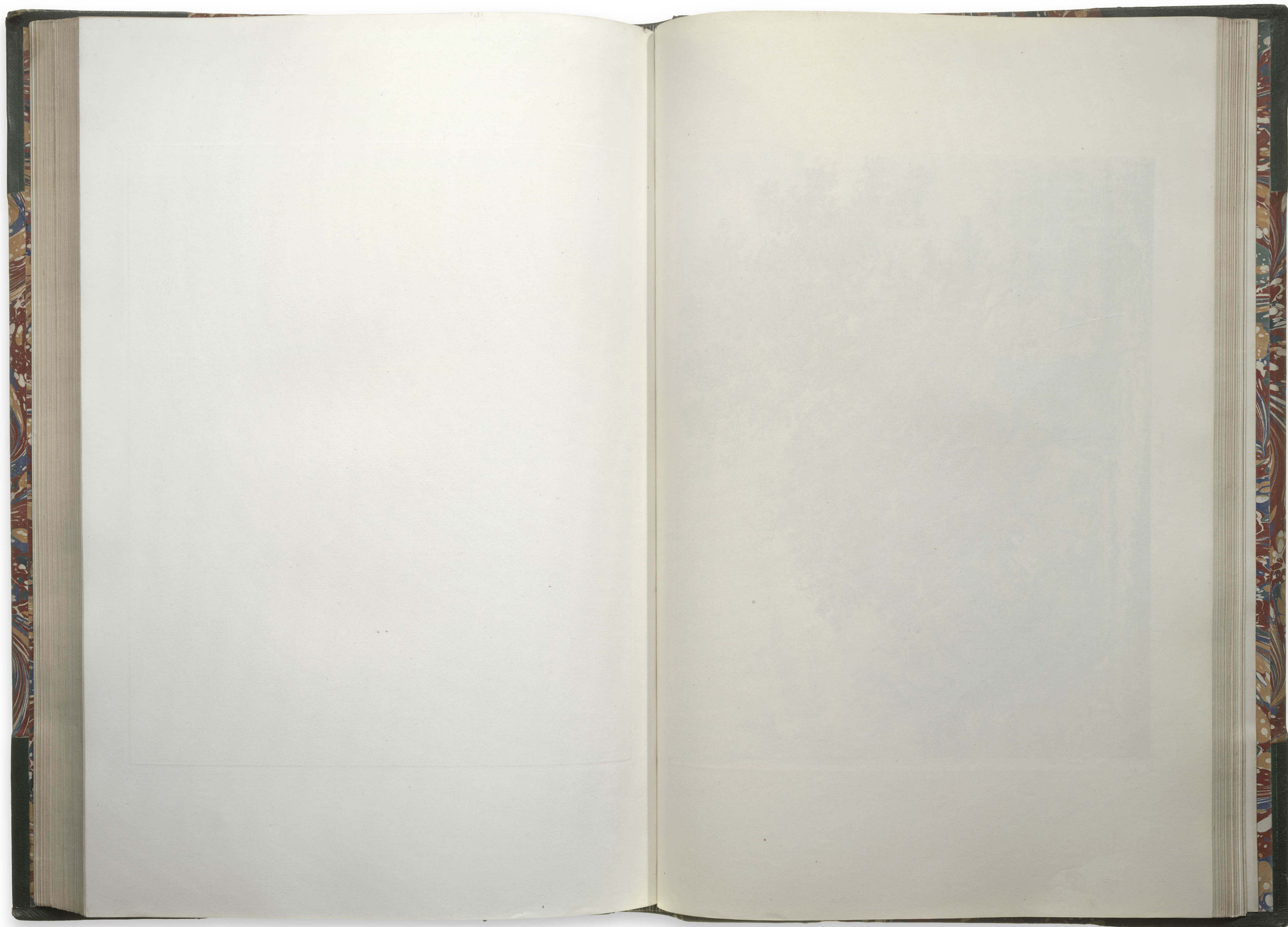
PLATE XXXV.—GOG AND MAGOG.

THESE fine Trees stand in Yardley Forest, and are the property of the Marquess of Northampton. The largest of them, Gog, measures thirty-eight feet at the roots, twenty-eight feet at three feet from the ground; is fifty-eight feet in height, and contains sixteen hundred and sixty-eight feet seven inches of solid timber. Magog is more imposing in dimensions, measuring fifty-four feet four inches at the ground, and thirty-one feet three inches at three feet higher up; but in height it is inferior, being forty-nine feet; its solid contents are nine hundred and twelve feet ten inches. The estate of the Marquess of Northampton abounds with many other magnificent specimens of forest trees; and it will not lessen their interest to recollect, that among them the poet Cowper often pursued the train of moral thought, and wove the harmonious numbers, with which he afterwards



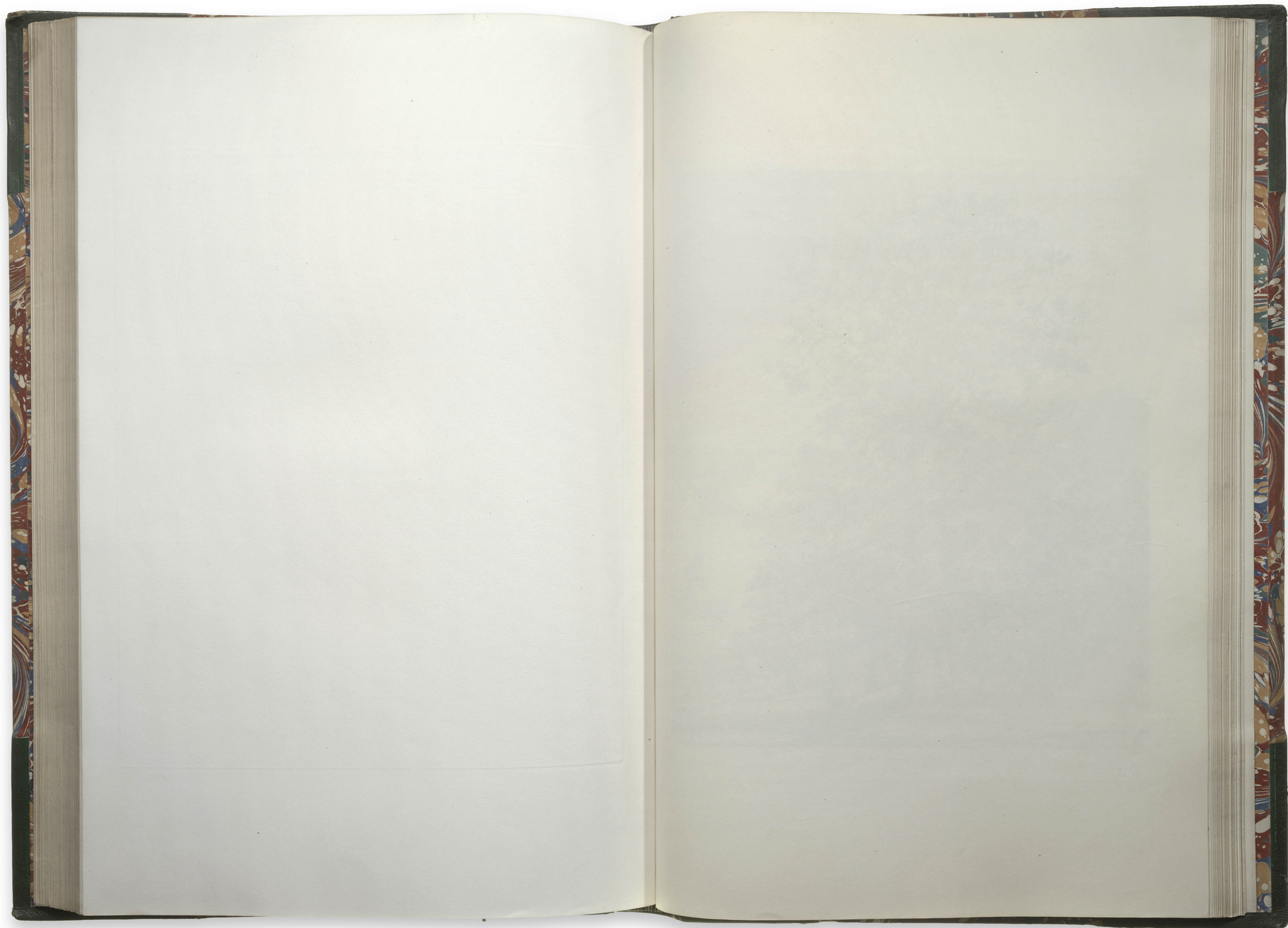
The Spanish Oak in Bagin's Park.

H. 50





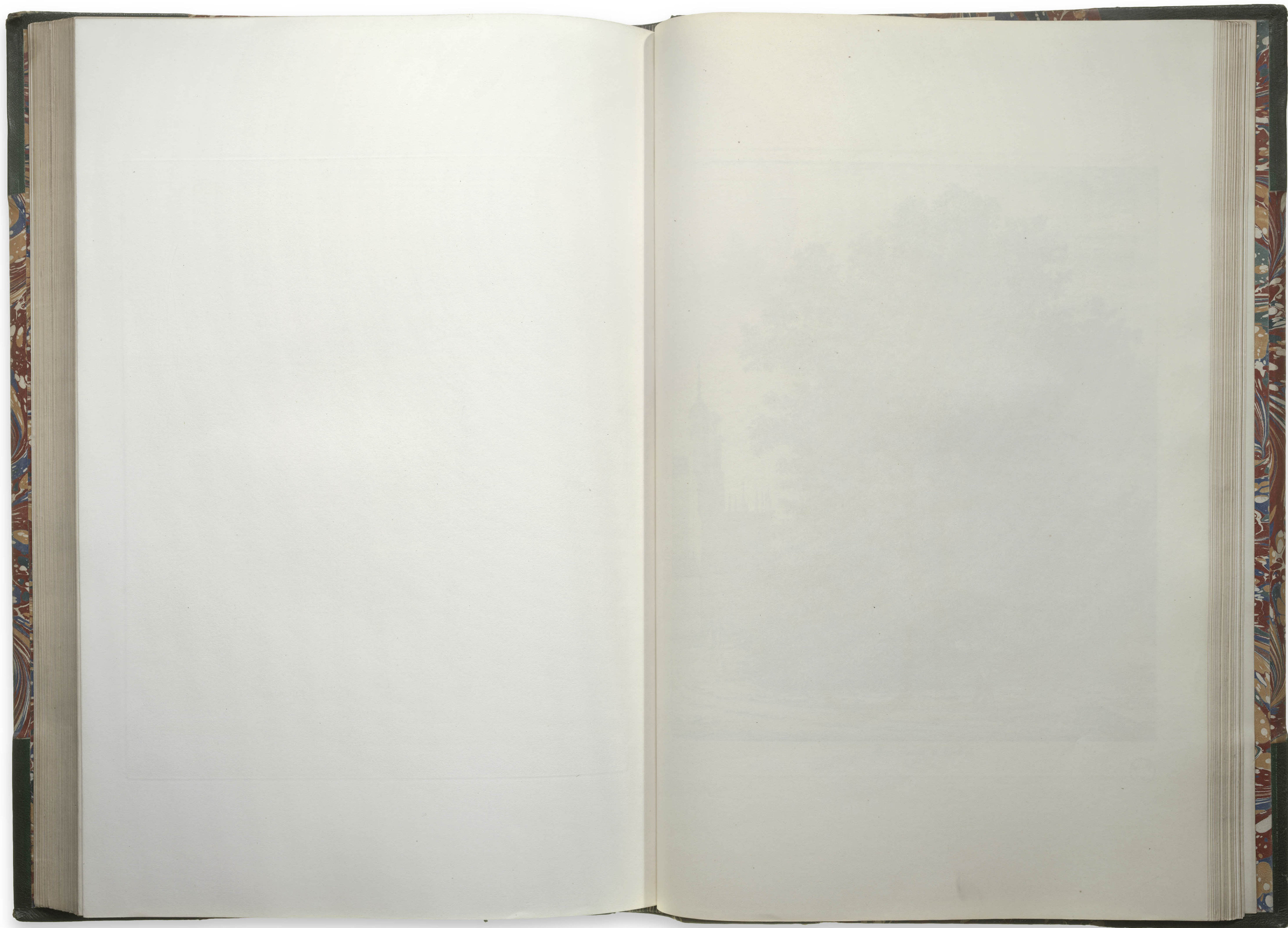
G. and M.





The tall Oak at Fredville.







Horse-Chestnut at Burlugh.

14
5

delighted and improved the world; and with what accuracy this observer of nature distinguished the different species of the production of the Forest, an accuracy not excelled by that of Spencer himself, may be seen in his description of the woodland haunts he so much loved.

"Nor less attractive is the woodland scene,
Diversified with trees of every growth,
Alike, yet various. Here the gray smooth trunks
Of ash, or lime, or beech, distinctly shine,
Within the twilight of their distant shades:
There lost behind a rising ground, the wood
Seems sunk, and shorten'd to its topmost boughs.
No tree in all the grove but has its charms,
Though each its hue peculiar; paler some,
And of a wannish gray; the willow such,
And poplar, that with silver lines his leaf,

And ash far-stretching his umbrageous arm;
Of deeper green the elm; and deeper still,
Lord of the woods, the long-surviving oak,
Some glossy-leaved, and shining in the sun,
The maple, and the beech, of oily nuts
Prolific, and the lime at dewy eve
Diffusing odours: nor unnoted pass
The sycamore, capricious in attire,
Now green, now tawny, and ere autumn yet
Have changed the woods, in scarlet honours bright."

PLATE XXXVI.—THE TALL OAK AT FREDVILLE.

THIS Oak completes the trio which has been already described as standing on the lawn of John Plumtre, Esq. of Fredville, in Kent; plates of the other two have also been given in the early numbers of this work. It is known by the appropriate name of *STATELY*, and is a beautiful specimen of a straight-stemmed Oak, which is rarely found to attain to so great a height, without branching out into exuberance of boughs. Seldom can three Oaks so differing from each other in individual character, and so interesting altogether, be found in such near proximity. Protected from violence, they are still likely to stand for many centuries; and it may be hoped that they will as long continue to delight the descendants of the family by whom they are at present so highly valued, and so carefully preserved.

PLATE XXXVII.—THE HORSE CHESNUT AT BURLEIGH.

THE Horse Chesnut, we are informed by Evelyn, was first brought from Constantinople to Vienna; thence into Italy, and so to France: but more immediately to us from the Levant. It is probable that its introduction into England took place about the year 1500; and so well has it liked its naturalization, that it at present forms one of the chief ornaments of our groves and parks; and from the value of its timber, the usefulness of its fruit in feeding deer, and the majestic beauty of its appearance, few trees will be found more deserving of the attention of the planter. To the painter the magnificence of its stature, and the beauty of its broad palmated leaves, and long pendant spikes of flowers scarcely atone for the exceeding regularity of its form, terminating as it invariably does when left to the hand of nature, in an exact parabola. But in the extraordinary specimen of this tree, which is to be seen in the Court-yard of Burleigh House, the ancient and highly interesting seat of the Marquess of Exeter, all its beauties will be found exhibited in their utmost perfection, without the drawback of a single disadvantage. From being enclosed in a space comparatively confined, the formality of its summit is exchanged for increased length of stem; the tree having shot up unusually high, most likely in the endeavour to lift its head above the surrounding walls, which at once shelter it from the injury, and impede that free play of the elements in which the "native burghers of the forest" naturally delight. Its branches feathering down to the velvet turf on which it stands, exhibit a delightful alternation of milk-white flowers and russet fruits; whilst the stately trunk displays an elegance and majesty, which combined with the venerable turrets that rise around, filling the mind with recollections of the Cecils and the Burleighs of former ages, render it an object not to be looked upon without exciting feelings in which tranquillity and admiration are most pleasingly united.

The height of this fine tree is sixty feet, its circumference at four feet from the ground is ten feet; it contains three hundred feet of solid timber, and its branches extend over an area of sixty-one feet in diameter.

PLATE XXXVIII.—THE WYCH ELM AT BAGOT'S MILL.

THIS tree is more distinguished by its beauty than its size. The spot in which it stands abounding in rural objects, each one connected with another in harmony and fitness, forms one of the scenes which it is impossible for a lover of nature to behold without pausing to admire, and which irresistibly appeal to the pencil of the artist. It is in such situations as these that an insulated tree inspires reflections peculiarly pleasing. It seems the common property of all who raise their humble tenements within sight of its branches. It is one of the delightful ornaments of nature that the poorest cottager may enjoy and be proud of. He loves to see the stranger stop to gaze at it, and derives a pleasure from his admiration, which, though he can scarcely trace it to any definite source, is yet perhaps as great and surely more pure than that which is felt by the owner of large domains who sees the woods that were planted by his ancestors prostrated beneath the axe, to satisfy the demands of some scheme of luxury or ambition.

PLATE XXXIX.—ELM AT CHECQUERS.

THIS venerable tree, in all probability the most ancient Elm in England, stands on the manor of Checquers, in Ellesborough in Buckinghamshire, so called from one of its ancient lords, John de Saccariis, or of the Exchequer, from whose family it passed to the Hawtreys, and from the Hawtreys to a younger branch of the Crokes, by whom it finally came into the possession of the family of its present owner, William Greenhill Russell, Esq.

"The old mansion called Checquers," says Lysons in his History of Buckinghamshire, "situated in a very romantic spot, amidst hills covered with beech and other trees, was built by the Hawtreys, whose arms are in the hall windows. In this house there are some good family portraits, among which are Oliver Cromwell, from whom the Russells were lineally descended, Lady Claypole, and other persons connected with the family." Close to this antique mansion stands, a fit companion to the scene, the venerable Elm, which, according to the traditional accounts in the family, handed down, as we are informed by its present possessor, through successive ages, was planted in the reign of Stephen—a most extraordinary instance of longevity in a tree, whose usual age has not been considered by any means to equal that of the Oak or Chesnut. It is now fast approaching to its last stage of decay; yet its enormous trunk, though hollowed into an absolute shell, displays in a circumference of thirty-one feet, sufficient remains of grandeur to denote the magnificent object it must have exhibited in its prime.

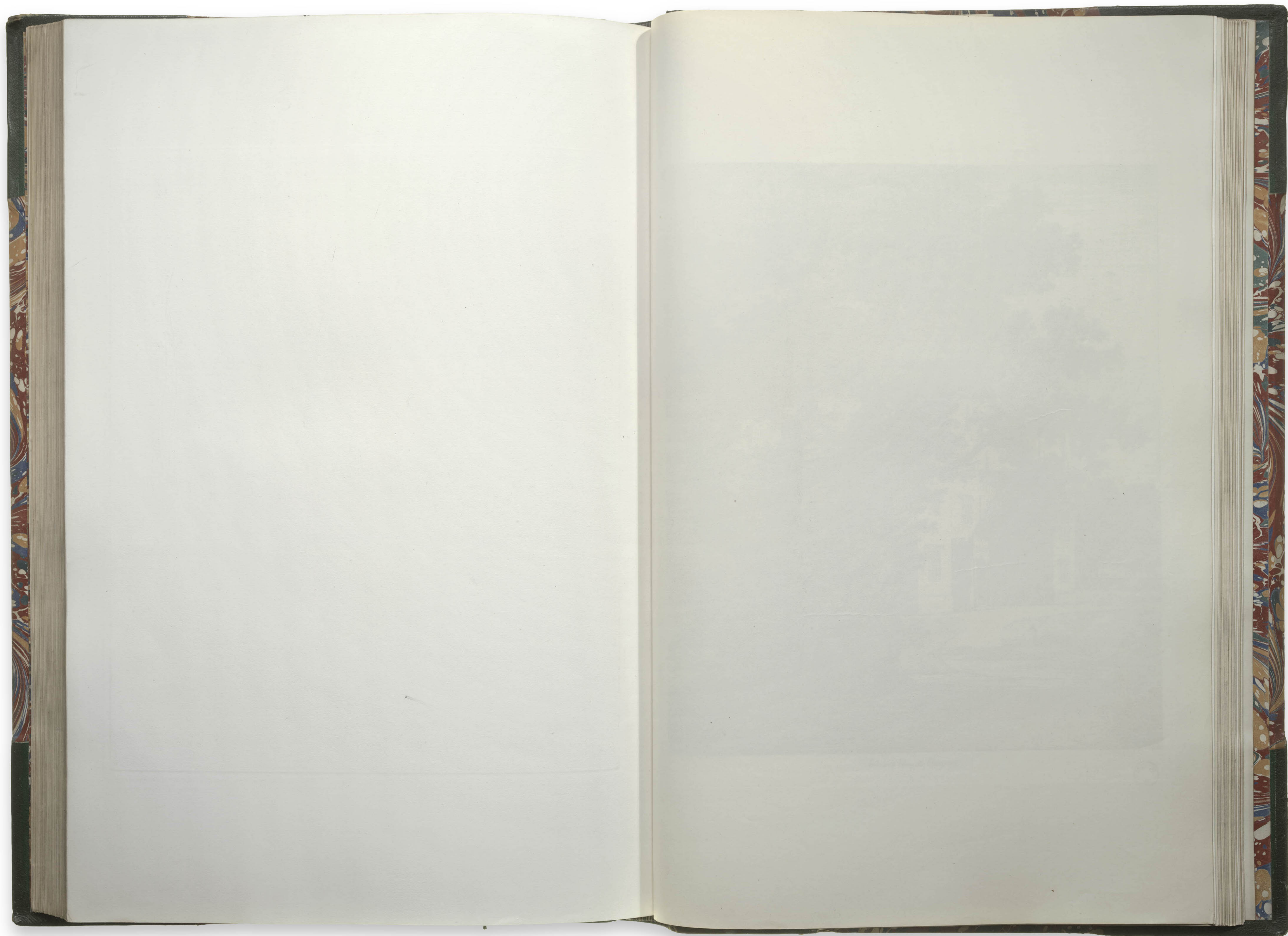
PLATE XL.—MAPLE IN BOLDRE CHURCH-YARD.

THE small or common Maple is very inferior in size to the Sycamore, or greater Maple; but the timber is much more valuable, and is held in the highest estimation by turners and cabinet-makers, on account of the exquisite beauty of veining which it frequently presents. The wood of the Maple is also much prized for musical instruments, on account of its lightness; and the tree itself yields a sap which upon evaporation will leave sugar as perfect in quality as that of the cane, though inferior in point of quantity. The ancients held the Maple in the greatest esteem; and tables inlaid with curious portions of it, or formed entirely of its wood when finely variegated, fetched prices which, even to the manufacturers of the buhl furniture of modern times, would appear unconscionable and incredible. Virgil erects his throne for "the good Evander" of Maple, inlaid with ivory; and Pliny gives an elaborate account of its properties and value. The Maple, so common in hedges, seldom attains any considerable size as a forest tree. The Maple in Boldre Church-yard is ten feet in circumference at the ground, and at four feet, seven feet six inches; at twelve, the trunk divides into branches; and the entire height of the tree is about forty-five feet. This is considered the largest maple in England, and is mentioned as such by Gilpin in his remarks on "Forest Scenery."



Wye River at Bagin's Mill.

18

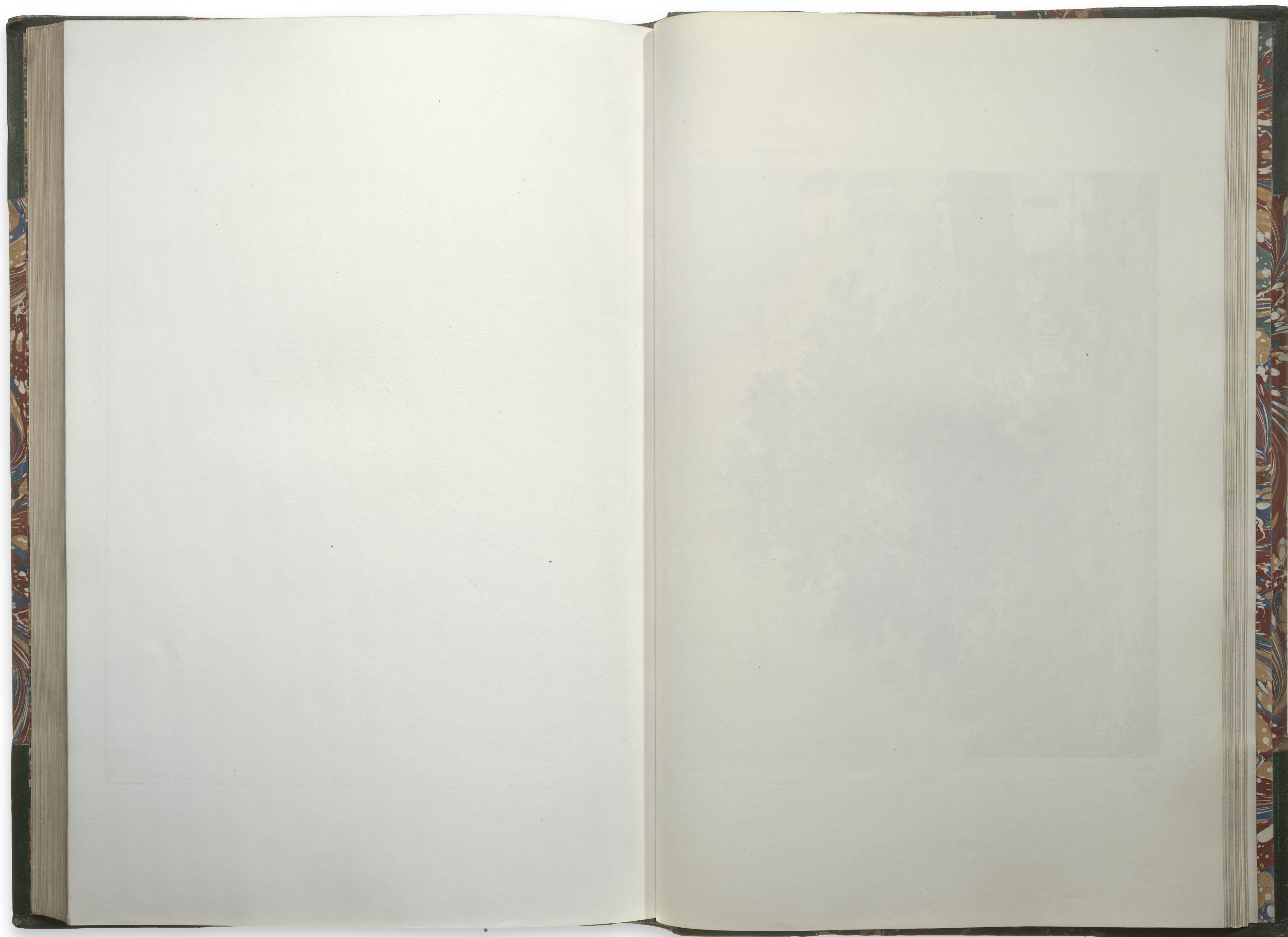




J. A. Smith del. 1822

Ancient Elm, at Okeover.







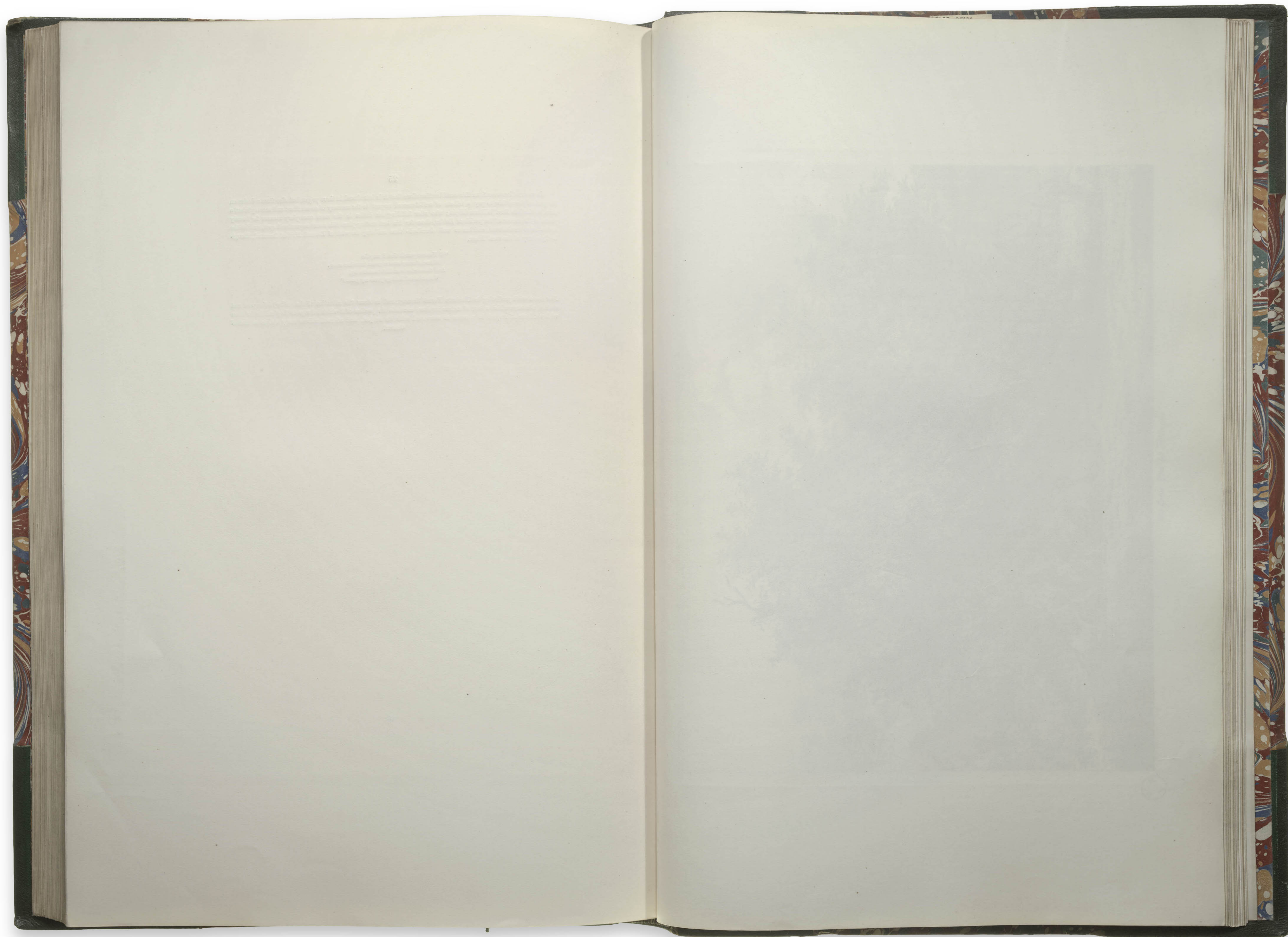
Maple at Belders on the New York

H. S.

It was not however from this consideration alone that it is introduced in these pages, but also from a desire on the part of the author to pay a tribute of well-deserved respect to the memory of so excellent and accomplished a man, as the late Rev. William Gilpin; who after fulfilling his duties in the most exemplary manner for twenty years, as the rector of the parish of Boldre, chose for his last resting-place this sweet sequestered spot, amidst the scenes he so much loved, and has so well described: thus realizing the wish of Bloomfield, that favoured, though lowly votary of the rural Muse,

"O Heaven permit that I may lie
Where o'er my course green branches wave;
And those who from life's tumults fly,
With kindred feelings press my grave."

Nor can a work professing to illustrate Forest Scenery, and to draw the attention of the reader to the pure and exalted pleasures which a love of nature inspires, conclude the portion of it which belongs to England better than with a tribute of respect to a name so connected with its subject, and adorned with so many virtues as that of
GILPIN.





The Great Yew at Fontenay.

PL. 5

SYLVA SCOTICA.

PLATE I.—THE FORTINGAL YEW.

SCOTLAND is, in every respect, too interesting and too important a portion of Great Britain, to be passed over in any work illustrative of national topography; and though it cannot in the present day be deemed, as it was in former ages, a thickly-wooded country, yet the specimens of Forest Scenery, which it affords in particular districts, are so grand and impressive, and many of the individual trees of different species so remarkable, and attended with so many "spirit stirring" associations, that a much larger portion of this work might have been devoted to the illustration of them had it not already nearly attained its destined limits; even whilst the author still found subjects of beauty and interest in every part of the kingdom continually awakening his admiration, and soliciting, nay, demanding his attention by attractions which he could not have resisted, had he not determined to carry his present undertaking no farther than the boundary he originally prescribed to it, when he first solicited that encouragement in its support, which he now has gratefully to acknowledge having been favoured with, beyond his most sanguine hopes. Under these circumstances, he trusts that in devoting the two concluding numbers of the SYLVA BRITANNICA to the trees of North Britain, he shall be considered as paying the tribute of respect not only generally, to

"A country famed for industry and song,"

but also more particularly to those public-spirited noblemen and gentlemen, among the foremost of whom he would reckon him to whom his feelings of admiration and esteem have led him to dedicate this portion of his work, who are daily consulting the interests of posterity by clothing their native hills with rich plantations, and carrying into execution every benevolent and patriotic scheme that can increase the sum of human happiness, and raise man in the scale of intellectual being.

Ancient Caledonia was, as the name implies, almost one vast forest. Many of the bleak moors and mosses which now disfigure the face of the country, and produce only barren heath, were formerly clothed with woods, that furnished useful timber and excellent pasturage. "During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries," says Chalmers, "not only the kings, but the bishops, barons, and abbots, had their forests in every district of North Britain, in which they reared infinite herds of cattle, horses, and swine. There are in the maps of Scotland a thousand names of places which are derived from woods which no longer exist on the face of the country; and there are in the Chartularies numerous notices of forests, where not a tree is now to be seen." John Despaynding, the canon of Elgin, who had the honour to be the host of Edward I., claimed by petition twenty oaks out of the forest of Langmorgan, to repair his church of Duffus, which prayer was granted. From the appearance at present of Langmorgan, the undoubted site of the ancient forest, it is not easy to persuade ourselves that oaks ever existed there: yet very large ones have in our own times been dug from below the unpromising surface; and from the number of petitions of a similar nature still upon record, as pertaining to forests in different parts of the kingdom, oak timber appears to have been in great abundance, and general use. It would be as easy to trace the causes of the decay of Scottish woods, as it is to prove that they formerly existed: devastating wars, and the improvident and wasteful consumption of wood for fuel, as well for salt works, as for domestic purposes, would sufficiently account for the thinning and final extinction of vast tracts of forest land, which when once denuded, the unsettled habits of the country in early times did not allow of restoring by planting; but the object of this work is to preserve individual remains, rather than go into general inquiries: it therefore only remains to remark, that under the spirited exertions of such planters as the Duke of Athol, the Duke of Montrose, Lord Moray, and many others, the hills of Scotland must in time be clad in all their ancient magnificence, with

"——— trees of various shade,
Scene behind scene with fair delusive pomp,"

and the country enriched by those generous benefactors who seek no selfish gratification, beyond the conscious pleasure of having performed a disinterested duty.

THE FORTINGAL YEW is one of the largest and oldest trees in Scotland; it stands in the Church-yard of Fortingal, or the Fort of the Strangers, so called from its being in the vicinity of a small Roman camp; a wild romantic district lying in the heart of the Grampian Mountains, comprehending Glenlyon and Rannoch, abounding in lakes, rivers, and woods, and formerly inhabited by that lawless tribe of freebooters, who setting

the civil power at defiance in the intricacy of their fastnesses, laid all the surrounding country under that species of contribution so well known at the time it was exacted, by the name of Black-mail.

This prodigious tree was measured by the Hon. Judge Barrington, before the year 1770, and is stated by him to have been at that time fifty-two feet in circumference; but Pennant describes it as measuring fifty-six feet and a half. The same elegant tourist also speaks of it as having formerly been united to the height of three feet; Captain Campbell, of Glenlyon, having assured him that when a boy, he had often climbed over the connecting part. It is now, however, decayed to the ground, and completely divided into two distinct stems, between which the funeral processions were formerly accustomed to pass. It is impossible to ascertain its age; but judging from its present state and appearance, it is not too much to suppose that its date is contemporary with that of Fingal himself, whose descendants the Highlanders in its vicinity are fond of styling themselves.

From the earliest ages the Yew tree has been considered an emblem of mourning. As such it was held sacred by the Egyptians, who transmitted their idea of it to the Greeks; from them it was adopted by the Romans, who in their turn imparted it to the Britons. In the church-yards of North and South Wales, in particular, it abounds even at the present time; and in many of the villages in these provinces, the Yew tree and the Church are coeval. It was formerly not less common in the church-yards of Italy; and in the original charter for building the Church at Perone, in Picardy, dated in the year 684, a remarkable clause is inserted, containing directions for the proper preservation of a particular Yew tree. This individual Yew tree was in existence in the year 1799, near 1100 years after this notice of it in the charter, which may consequently be regarded as a valuable document towards ascertaining the great durability of this species of wood. The custom of planting the Yew tree singly, as if loneliness of situation added to the sacredness of its character, is very ancient. Statius, in his sixth Thebaid, calls it "the solitary Yew;" and it is indeed seldom to be found in groups, excepting in the immediate vicinity of the grave. Nevertheless, on the island of Incheonakhead in Loch Lomond, there are several thousand large Yew trees, perhaps the only plantation of the same kind and extent in Europe, and which probably owes its origin to the period when archery was almost the sole mode of warfare.

PLATE II.—THE LARCHES AT DUNKELD.

THE LARCH is a native of the Alps and Appennine mountains, and has not been introduced into this country more than a century. It is of quick growth, and flourishes best in poor soils, and exposed situations, which renders it valuable in those places, where land is of little other value than to afford footing for such hardy mountaineers. It is likewise esteemed for the substance commonly called Venice turpentine, which it yields in great abundance, by means of incisions made in the trunk; it also exudes from the pores of the wood, under the action of the sun, and renders it capable of resisting wet; hence it is much used in Switzerland for covering the roofs of houses.

The Larches represented in the accompanying plate, are the property of his Grace the Duke of Athol, and are supposed to be the largest in Scotland. The largest of them was measured in the month of March, 1796, and its dimensions were as follow. At three feet from the ground, ten feet and a half in circumference; at twenty-four feet from the ground, seven feet seven inches; its height eighty-five feet. In July, 1825, it was measured again, and at the same distances from the ground, it was found to be thirteen feet, and nine feet five inches in circumference, and had increased in height to ninety-seven feet and a half. It was brought to Dunkeld about ninety years ago, by Colonel Menzies, of Cullards, being the first that was introduced into Scotland; and under the idea of its being a tender shrub, the first five years of its transplantation were passed in the shelter of a green-house. These graceful trees are surrounded by objects of the most interesting nature; their branches almost touch the venerable remains of the Abbey of Dunkeld, whilst the bleak and barren hill which was once Birnam-wood, rises behind in the distance, and fills the imagination of the spectator with poetic feeling; with thoughts of Macbeth, and Dunsinane, and of that master spirit who could thus give to airy nothings

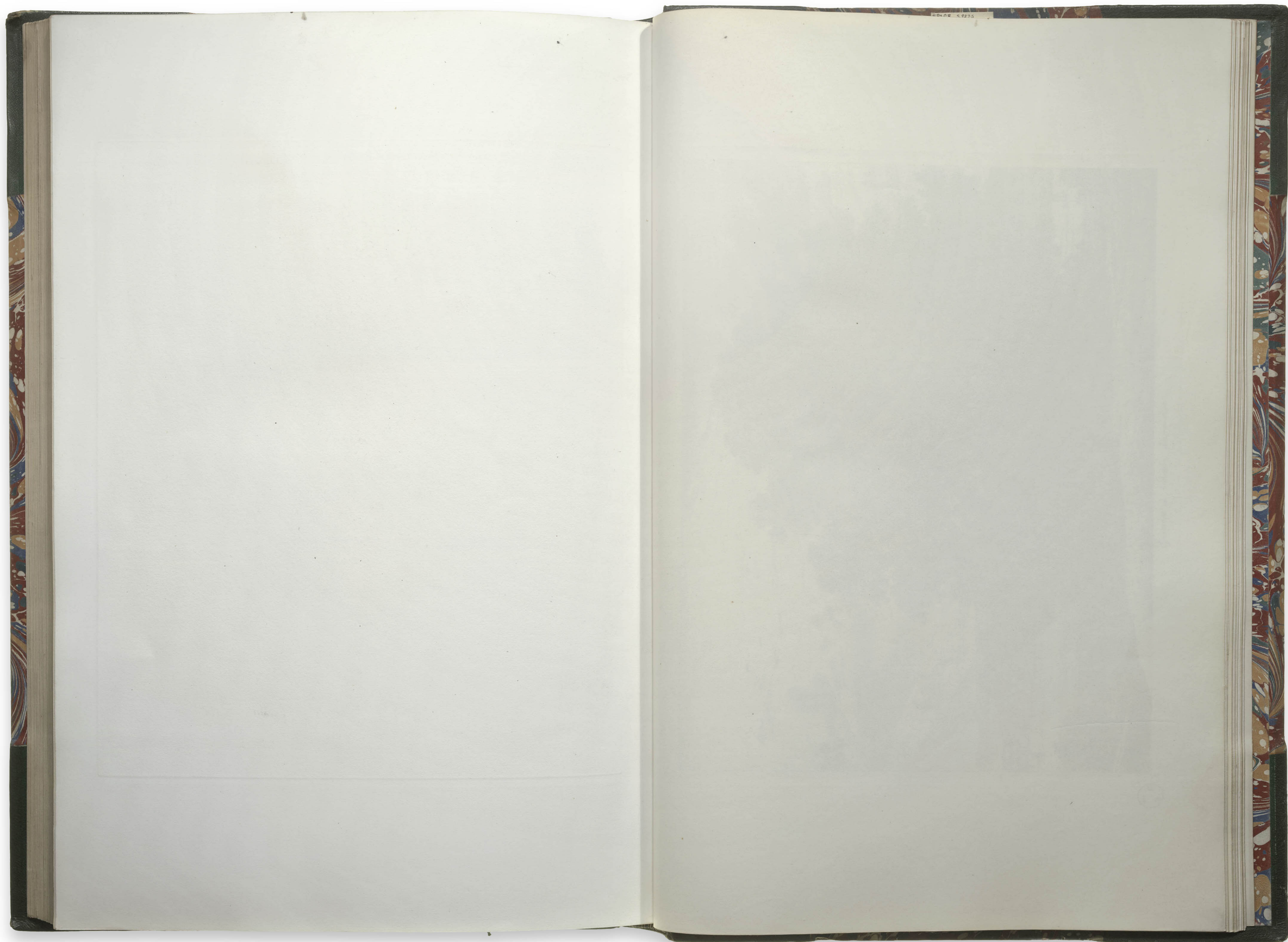
"A local habitation and a name,"

that should make the lapse of centuries appear as moments only; so freshly does all he has ever described rush into the mind, whenever the scenes he has chosen for his actions present themselves to the eye.



Larches at Dunkeld.

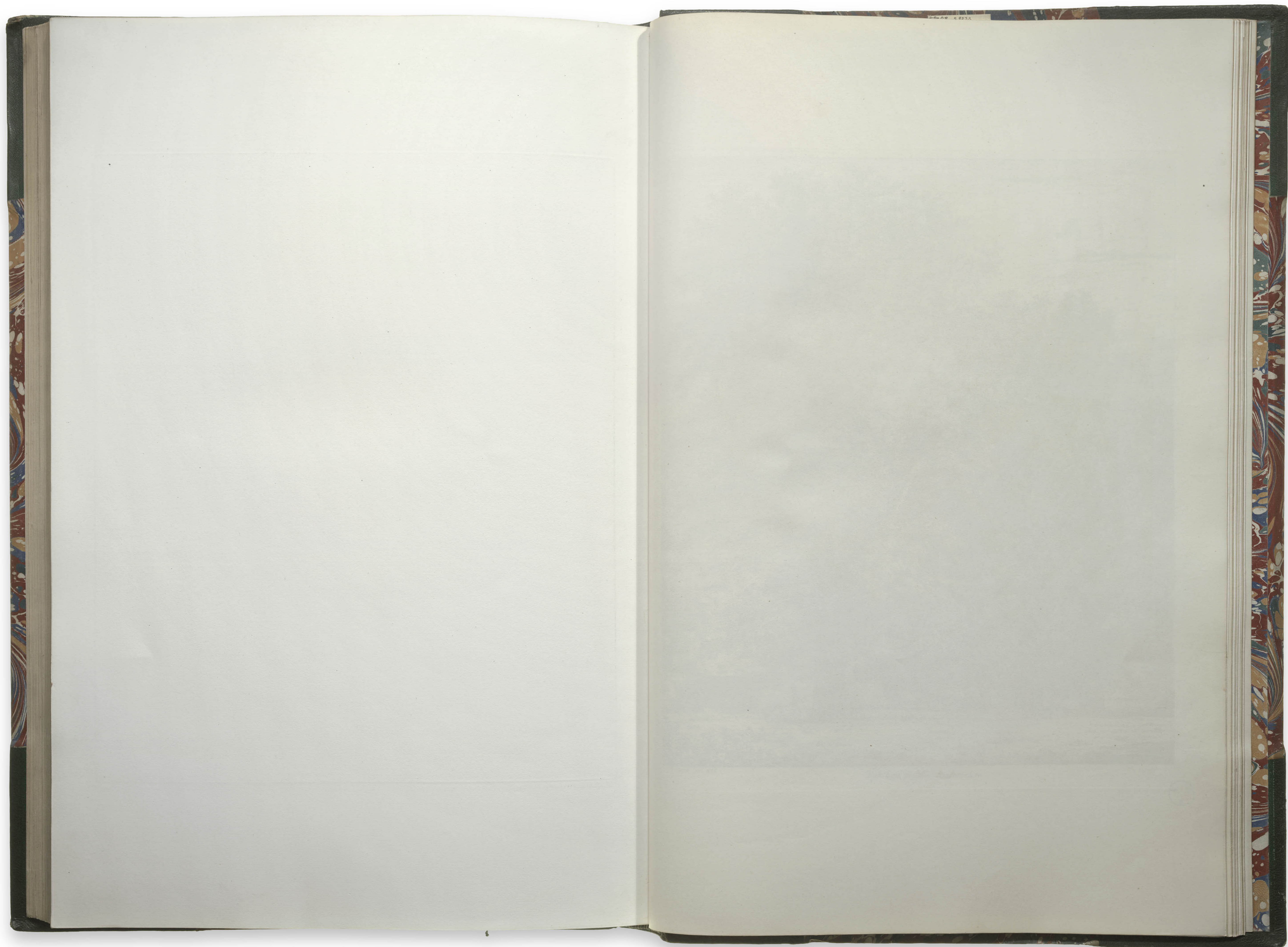






Sycamore at Bampton, Hampshire

H. 2





Wych Elm at Belloe, Kent

1825

With the Thane of Cawdor, the writer of this article might say, whilst he was exploring the beauties of Dunkeld, "So foul and fair a day I have not seen," for it was one of incessant rain, which yet had no power to veil the enchantments of the scene, or to restrain his steps in quest of them; never, indeed, did he find "the wildly devious walk" more delightful than that which he took alone, on the banks of the Tay, by one of the most silent, solemn, and sequestered paths that he had ever trodden. The freshness of the woods, the murmuring of the river, the noble aspect of the hills, presenting new features at every winding of the road, and arrayed in sober purple, or the deepest azure, filled his mind with admiration and delight, undisturbed by any trace of man, except what was here and there afforded by a solitary corn-field, with its sheaves still standing, or a lonely cottage, perched at some angle of a rock. As he retraced his steps, the grey tower of the ruined cathedral, bosomed in woods, and overhung by lofty hills purpled with heath, the few houses of the town clustering around it, and the broad river, winding along the valley, with its majestic, though modern bridge, formed a picture which nothing could have prevented him from sketching but the torrents of rain, that would have rendered the sketch illegible; and which nothing could have consoled him for leaving, without, at least, an attempt to fix it, but the hope that he should at some future period revisit it, under circumstances more favourable to the lengthened contemplation of its beauties, which their variety and richness deserved.

PLATE III.—THE SYCAMORE AT BISHOPTON.

THE soil of Scotland seems particularly favourable to the Sycamore, which grows in it to a great size, wearing an undaunted aspect, and throwing out its bold arms, as if in defiance of the utmost inclemency of the skies.

The Sycamore at Bishopston in Renfrewshire, is the property of Sir John Maxwell, Bart. It is a stately spreading tree, twenty feet in circumference at the ground, about sixty feet in height, and contains seven hundred and twenty feet of solid timber. It stands on the banks of the Clyde, on the opposite side of which the insulated rock of Dumbarton rises in solitary majesty, crowned with its strong fortress, of little use in "these weak piping times of peace," but once deemed the "Key of Scotland;" and still exciting a melancholy interest as the place where Wallace, that hero dear alike to the sober page of history, and the wilder graces of tradition, was delivered up to his enemies by the treachery of a pretended friend.

PLATE IV.—THE WYCH ELMS AT POLLOC.

THIS graceful group of Wych Elms stands on the banks of the river Cart, at Polloc in Renfrewshire, just beneath the site of the castle formerly occupied by the ancestors of Sir John Maxwell, Bart., the present proprietor, (and, since the forfeiture of the Earl of Nithsdale, chief of the family of Maxwell), from about the middle of the thirteenth century. As they are opposite to a row of trees of the same kind, which are now nearly all decayed, it may be presumed that they are of considerable antiquity. The ground on which they stand is fraught with interesting recollections, lying between Crookstone Castle, the residence of Lord Darnley, and the field of Langside, and adjoining the ancient Roman camps of Northwood and Camphill.

The principal tree in this group is of extraordinary health and vigour, and does not exhibit the slightest appearance of decay; it is completely covered with foliage, and its leaves, instead of being small, as is generally the case in old trees, are large and luxuriant; it still sends forth its tribute of new shoots annually to the spring, and continues to increase both in height and girth. In 1812, it was ten feet ten inches in circumference at five feet from the ground; in 1824, it measured eighteen feet one inch in circumference at the surface of the ground, and eleven feet ten inches at five feet from the ground: its height is eighty-eight feet, and it contains six hundred and sixty-nine feet of solid timber.

PLATE V.—THE WALLACE OAK.

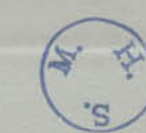
THERE is perhaps no name in the annals of Scotland more justly celebrated than that of Wallace; one of the bravest of her heroes, and most disinterested of her patriots. Hence his steps are pointed out, wherever they can be traced, with almost religious reverence; the mountain path which he may have tracked, the head-long torrent which he may have crossed, the rugged fastness in which he may have entrenched himself, still bear his name in many parts of the country, and still invite the wanderings and charm the imagination of those who are capable of feeling the force of the sublime sentiment—

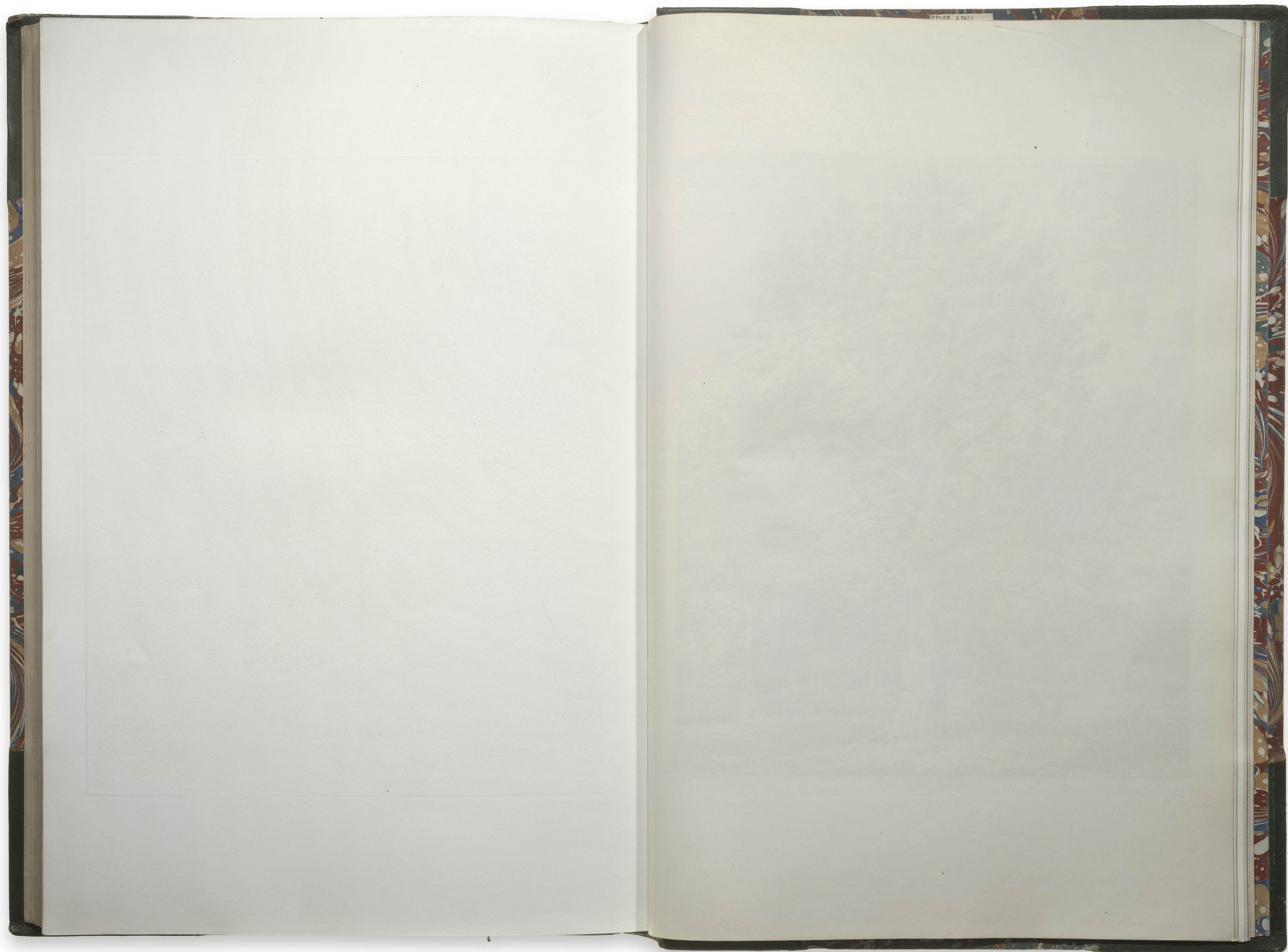
"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori."

Among the memorials to the fame of Wallace which the gratitude of posterity has delighted to point out, the trees under which he is known to have reposed or encamped, have been treated with a degree of attachment which, defeating its aim in its excess, has ultimately caused the destruction of the object it wished to commemorate. Hence the famous Oak in Torwood is no longer remaining. It stood in the middle of a swampy moss, having a causeway round it; but the last fragments of its ruins have been carried off by the pilgrims whom its fame attracted, and only the spot on which it stood now remains for them to pay their devotions to. Of Earnside Wood, where Wallace defeated the English, on the 12th of June, 1298, and which formerly stretched four miles along the shores of the Frith, not a vestige is left; and in the same manner, many other individual trees and woodland tracts, once rendered interesting by being associated with the valiant darings and hair-breadth scapes of Wallace, have bowed before the warring elements, or the un pitying axe. One Oak which bears his name still however survives, and is perhaps more interesting than any of those we may otherwise lament, on account of its standing immediately at the place of his birth, which was Ellerslie, or Elderslee, three miles to the south-west of Paisley, in Renfrewshire. It is mentioned by Semple, in his "Continuation of Crawford's History of Renfrewshire," as "the large Oak tree, which is still standing alone, in a little enclosure, a few yards south from the great road between Paisley and Kilbarchan; being on the east side of Elderslee rivulet, where there is a stone bridge with one arch, the manor of Elderslee being a few yards distant from the rivulet on the west side. They say that Sir William Wallace and three hundred of his men hid themselves upon that tree among the branches (the tree being then in full blossom,) from the English. The tree is indeed very large, and well spread in the branches, being about twelve feet in circumference." p. 260. 4to. 1782. The present dimensions of the Wallace Oak, as communicated by Mr. Macquisten, an accurate land-surveyor, are twenty-one feet in circumference at the ground; and at five feet from it, thirteen feet two inches. It is sixty-seven feet in height, and its branches extend on the east side to forty-five feet, on the west to thirty-six, on the south to thirty, and on the north to twenty-five, covering altogether an extent of nineteen English, or fifteen Scots poles, land measure. According to the testimony of aged residents in the neighbourhood, the branches of this tree, about thirty years ago, covered above a Scotch acre of ground; and one old person in particular, a lame man, who was present at its measurement, pointed out a spot on the ancient turnpike road, forty yards north from the trunk of the tree, where he said that, when young, he used to strike the branches with his stilt. This renders the account of the extent of ground it formerly covered worthy of belief; as well as the number of men which tradition reports it to have concealed, along with their brave leader, by whose name it is known. It is a peculiarity in the trees in this part of Renfrewshire, that their branches generally extend more to the south and east than to the north and west. The Wallace Oak seems destined, in sharing the fame of others of its brethren, who have been honoured by sheltering the hero Wallace, to share their fate likewise of despoliation: every year its branches pay tribute to its renown, and the western Highlanders, in particular, carry off relics from it in an abundance which threatens extinction, at no very distant period, to the parent stem, unless it be protected from further violence by its present owner, Archibald Spiers, Esq. of Elderslie, M.P. who may not be quite aware of the extent to which ravages are committed upon it through the good feeling, though mistaken judgment, of the majority of its visitants.



The Wallace Oak







J. P. Smith sculp. 1885.

Sliver Tor at Rosemeath.

45
8





Scotch-Fir at Dunmore

14
5

PLATE VI.—THE SILVER FIR AT ROSENEATH.

The Silver or Female Fir is the most beauteous and graceful of all its numerous tribe. It is common in the mountainous parts of Scotland, where, as Evelyn justly observes, "are trees of wonderful altitude, which grow upon places so inaccessible and far from the sea, that, as one says, they seem to be planted by God on purpose for nurseries of seed, and monitors to our industry; reserved, with other blessings, to be discovered in our days, amongst the new-invented improvements of husbandry, not known to our southern people of this nation. Did we consider the pains they take to bring them out of the Alps, we should less stick at the difficulty of transporting them from the utmost parts of Scotland."

The Silver Fir represented in the plate is the property of his Grace the Duke of Argyll. It is about ninety feet in height. In girth it is twenty-two feet four inches at one foot from the ground, and seventeen feet five inches at five feet from the ground. Its solid contents are estimated at six hundred and nineteen cubic feet ten inches; but this calculation is probably only an approximation to the truth. The age of the tree is unknown: the introduction of the Silver Fir into Scotland is however commonly understood to have taken place two hundred and twenty years since, which period corresponds very well with the size of this tree, when compared with others of the same species, the ages of which are known. Evelyn mentions two Silver Firs in Harefield Park, Middlesex, "that being planted there anno 1603, at two years' growth from the seed, are now (1679) become goodly masts. The biggest of them from the ground to the upper bough is eighty-one feet, though forked on the top, which has not a little impeded its growth. The girth or circumference below is thirteen feet, and the length, so far as is timber, that is, to six inches square, seventy-three feet. In the middle seventeen inches square, amounting by calculation to one hundred and forty-six feet of good timber."—*Silen*, p. 204. edit. 1776.

This quickness of growth is only one of many recommendations in this beautiful species of Fir: but it is one of great importance in regard to planting it in avenues, and near houses; for which it is equally calculated by the graceful stateliness of its form, and the beauty of its foliage, presenting on one side the bright green of the emerald, and on the other a delicate relief of silvery stripes, which, when agitated by the wind, gives it an agreeable variety of appearance.

PLATE VII.—THE SCOTCH FIR AT DUNMORE.

Though the Fir will grow in all parts of the kingdom, and is as useful in clothing the barren wolds of Yorkshire as the rugged mountains of Scotland, it perhaps nowhere attains such perfection as in the latter country; particularly in those situations in the Highlands where it is most exposed to a northern aspect; for in proportion to the tardiness of its vegetation, in consequence of the little influence of the sun upon it for months together, it completes by slow and sure degrees the health and strength of its timber far beyond that which is nurtured to prematurity of stature in richer soils and warmer situations.

This remark may be applied to all other timber trees as well as to the Fir. Pliny observes, that such as grow in moist and sheltered places are not so close, compact, and durable, as those which are more exposed. And Homer, who like Shakespeare had read the book of nature as well as that of humanity, judiciously assigns to Agamemnon a spear formed of a tree which had braved the fury of the tempest: he also puts into the mouth of Didymus the express reason for this choice; "because," says he, "it becomes harder and tougher in proportion as it is weather-beaten." The wise Chiron shows the same prudence in choosing a spear for Achilles from a mountain tree:

"Alone, untouch'd, Pelides' jav'lin stands,
Not to be poised but by Pelides' hands:
From Pelion's shady brow the plant entire
Old Chiron rent, and shaped it for his sire;

Whose son's great arm alone the weapon wields,
The death of heroes, and the dread of fields."
ILIAD, b. xvi.

Nevertheless that the Fir can so readily be forced to speedy growth is an advantage in many respects. Evelyn mentions one which "did shoot no less than sixty feet in height, in little more than twenty years;" he, therefore, who may be waiting impatiently to see his newly-erected mansion enveloped in the graceful shade and salutary shelter which only stately trees can give, will do well to cultivate

"Cedar, and Pine, and Fir, and branching Palm;"

though even then he must not expect that his avenues will display the dignity of ages afforded by the Oak,—that truly patrician tree, which testifies so independently to the antiquity of the property which it may adorn. Nobility has been, acutely enough, defined to be “ancient riches;” and assuredly one of the most convincing outward signs of “ancient riches” is *ancient timber*; as proud a badge of distinction to its proprietors as any that can be afforded by blazoned shields or storied urns, and a more desirable one, as allowing others to participate in the enjoyment of it, and inspiring only ideas of tranquillity and usefulness.

Of all the numerous tribe of Pine, or Fir trees, the *Pinus Sylvestris*, or real Scotch Fir, is the most to be prized for the value of its timber: when it arrives at a full age, its wood resembles the laburnum in colour, and is nearly as hard. The Fir in Dummore Wood, Stirlingshire, the property of the Earl of Dummore, perhaps the largest in the Lowlands of Scotland, is fully as remarkable for its beauty as for its magnitude; affording a very pleasing specimen of the characteristic form of its species. It is sixty-seven feet in height; eleven feet three inches in girth at the ground, and ten feet three inches at seventeen feet from it. The quantity of solid timber which it contains is two hundred and sixty-one feet, leaving out of the measurement all branches below six inches in diameter: its age is not known, though that of the Fir in general may be ascertained by the grain of the wood, which appears distinctly in circles, annually formed from the centre to the fork. “Upon cutting a tree close to the root,” says Mr. Farquarson, of Marlee, in a letter to Dr. Hunter of York, “I can venture to point out the exact age, which in these old Firs comes to an amazing number of years. I lately pitched upon a tree of two feet and a half diameter, which is near the size of a planted Fir of fifty years of age; and I counted exactly two hundred and fourteen circles or coats, which makes this natural Fir above four times the age of the planted one.”

PLATE VIII.—THE ASH AT CARNOCK.

This beautifully luxuriant tree,—

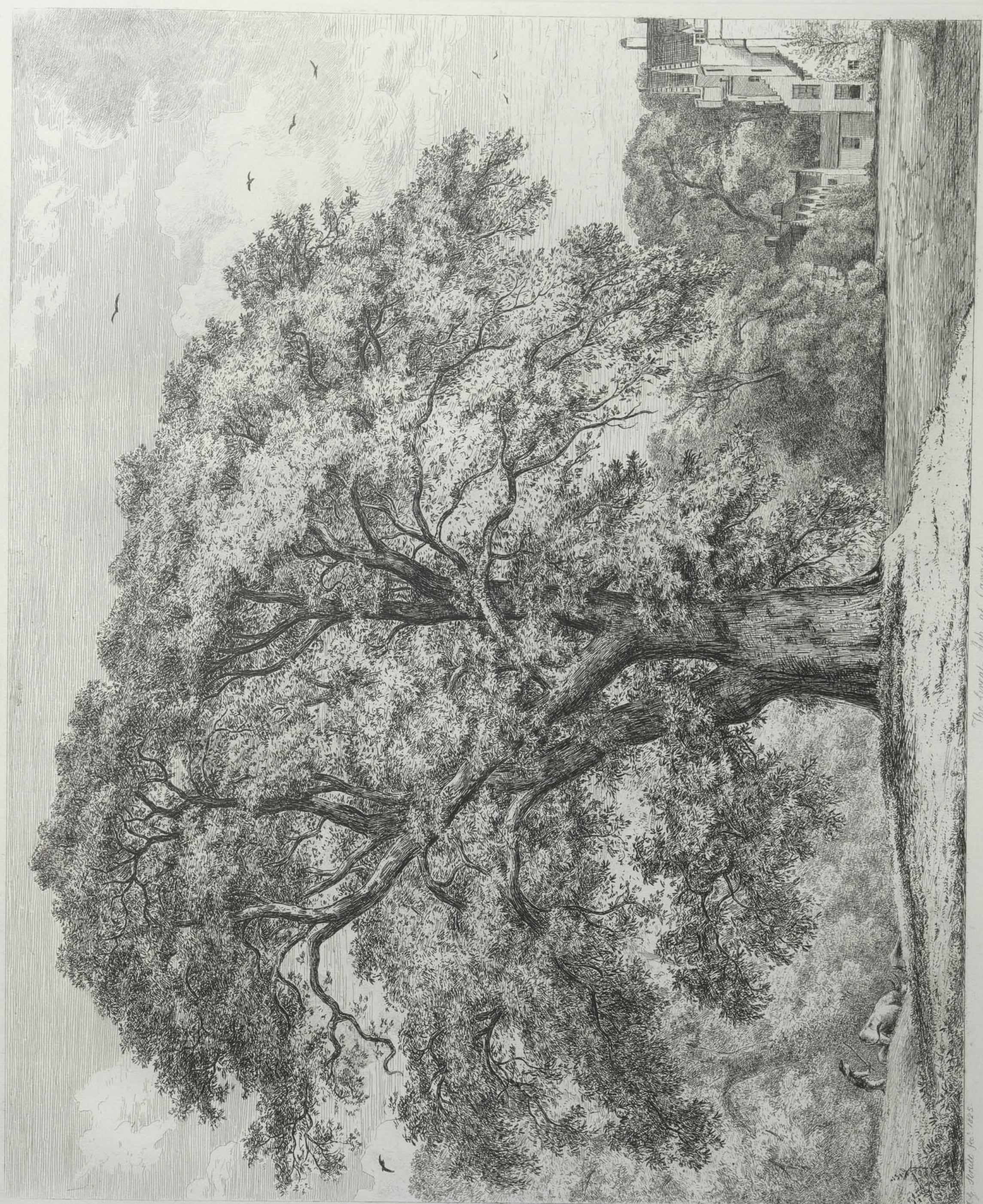
“—far spreading his umbrageous arm,”

almost embraces the venerable mansion near which it stands. It is the property of Michael Stewart Nicholson, Esq., and is supposed to be the largest in Scotland, even when measured at the smallest part of the trunk. Its dimensions in July 1825, at the time that the drawing of it was taken, were as follows:—ninety feet in height; thirty-one feet in circumference at the ground; nineteen feet three inches, at five feet from the ground; and twenty-one feet six inches, at four feet higher up. At ten feet from the ground it divides into three large branches, each of which is ten feet in circumference. It was planted about the year 1596, by Sir Thomas Nicholson of Carnock, in Stirlingshire, Lord Advocate of Scotland in the reign of James VI. It is at the present period in full vigour and beauty, combining airy grace in the lightness of its foliage and the playful ramifications of its smaller branches, with solidity and strength in its silvery stem and principal arms. Delightful indeed is it to contemplate the variety and surpassing beauty of many of these “houses not built with hands,” proclaiming to the viewless winds, the eyes of heaven, and the heart of man, the wisdom and the love of the Eternal Architect, whose fiat calls them into existence, and whose benevolence wills them to live for ages. Nor is it without regret that the Author sees himself arrived at the end of a task so congenial to his feelings, as that of commemorating some of those silent but happy “inheritors of the earth,” to which the shorter-lived habitants of it owe so much both of profit and enjoyment. Nevertheless, he rejoices in the opportunity his work has afforded him, of consecrating to his native country a trophy illustrative of her woodland treasures, her pride, her ornament and defence; a trophy, which he would fain offer up to her as expressive of his ardent wishes for the continuance of her prosperity and happiness, and that they may endure and flourish, for ages to come, in the full spirit of the Scriptural blessing,—

“As the days of a tree are the days of my people.”

FINIS.

BILLING, PRINTER, GUILDFORD.



The Great Oak at Carnock

H. S.

